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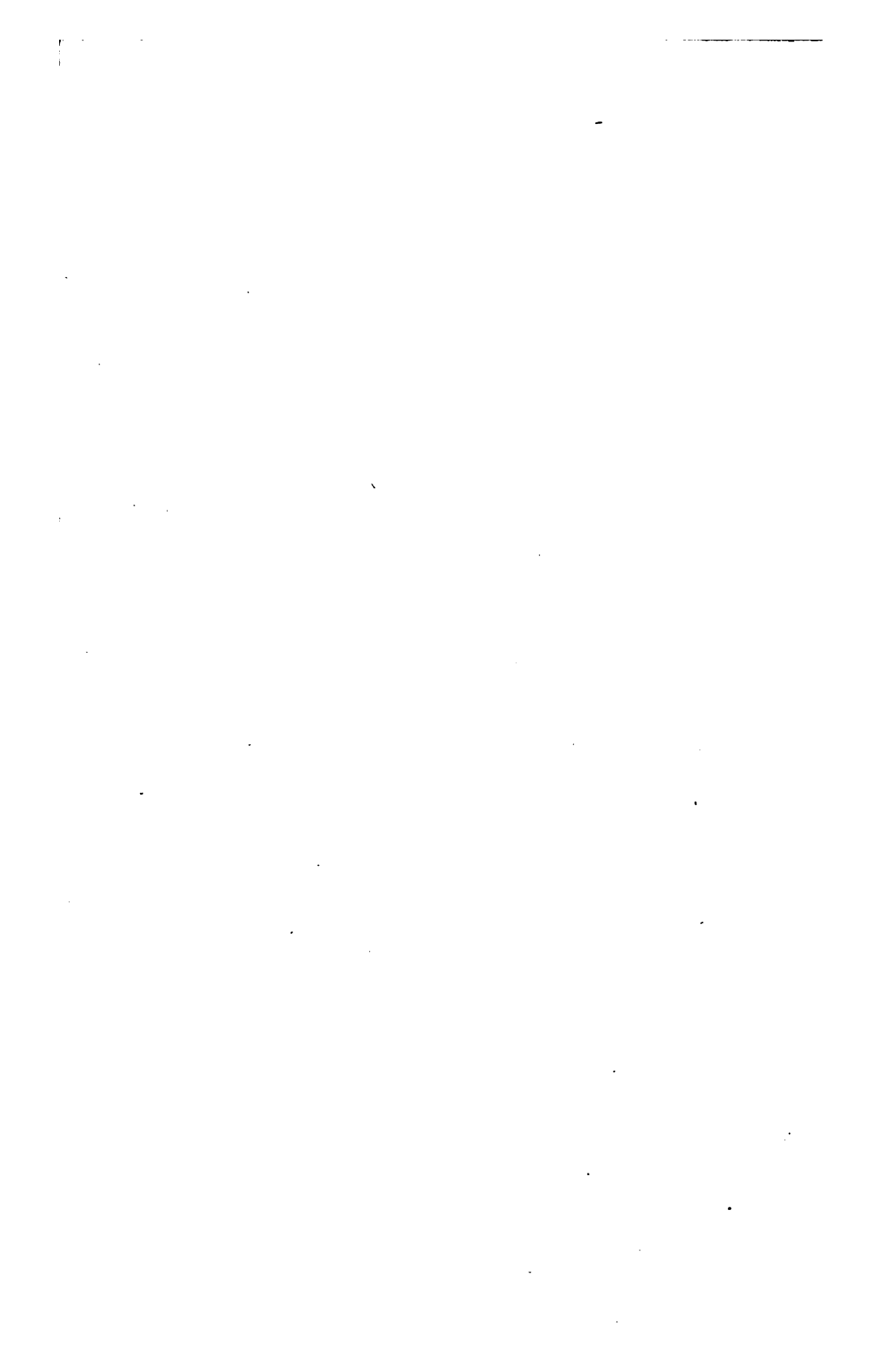
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STRICTURES

ON

MR. O'CONNELL'S LETTERS

TO THE

WESLEYAN METHODISTS,

&c.

WITH A POSTSCRIPT.

BY GEORGE CUBITT,

WESLEYAN-METHODIST MINISTER.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN MASON, 14, CITY-ROAD,

AND SOLD AT 66, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE first portion of the following pages will explain the occasion on which they were written. That there might not appear to be anything like flinching from Mr. O'Connell's attacks, a reply to one or two of the points urged by him was inserted in the public papers ; but for a full reply to them all, the writer appeals to his English fellow-Christians. Mr. O'Connell evidently retails the fragmentary slanders which others have collected for him, supplying the vituperation which is peculiarly his own, and thus constructing a sort of *breccia* to hurl at his adversaries. With him there can never be that fair, honest controversy which only aims at the establishment of the truth. He would laugh at the man who should be simple enough to suppose that this was one of his objects. Mr. O'Connell is not the ignorant dupe of the priesthood ; and when he asserted that our own Cranmer was "an indescribable monster of criminality," and that the English people were only actuated by an unconquerable hatred of the Irish, he never dreamt of being believed in England. He knew very well that here such assertions would be perfectly understood, except among a few who believe any thing that flatters their political prejudices ; but he also knew that they were calculated to promote the objects for which his agitation was kept up ; and, false as they were, he used them, because

they answered his purpose. And yet this is the man who talks about “unblushing indecency !”

My own object is exclusively to state what I believe to be *the truth*, on the subjects to which Mr. O’Connell refers ; and to state that truth in such a manner, as shall make its own appeal to the sober, honest judgment of the reader. Whatever the feelings of the Wesleyans may be as to their accuser, to the public, they hope, they will always be ready to pay that tribute of respect which is included in the defence of public character. If Mr. O’Connell’s charges are well-founded, the Protestant-Christian public in England will soon search out, and expose, the weakness of the defence ; but if the defence be sufficient both to repel the accusation, and to establish some opposite conclusions, that same public, unhappily divided as it is by political debate, will not, at least will not eventually, refuse to acknowledge it. That Protestant feeling is awakened in the land, is no longer matter of doubt. To those in whom that Protestant feeling glows, the following pages are respectfully addressed.

Several circumstances have prevented an earlier publication. Indeed, at one time, the writer thought that, having replied, in the newspapers, to the chief points of Mr. O’Connell’s attack, the more extended examination to which he had referred was not necessary. But Mr. O’Connell, or his friends, by giving the “Letters” in the pamphlet form, continue to publish the charges : they must therefore be fully examined. Whether the writer has done this successfully, or not, is not for him to say : but this he knows, that he has done it honestly.

LONDON, *Dec. 18th*, 1839.

STRICTURES,

&c.

ON the publication, in the month of May last, of the Government propositions in reference to the plan of National Education which they had adopted, the Wesleyan Ministers of the London District, assembled in their Annual Meeting, passed a Resolution strongly disapproving of the measure. A few days afterwards, the members of one or two Wesleyan Committees in London, composed of Ministers and laymen, (and, if the fact be worth notice, holding different political opinions,) met, and passed Resolutions to the same effect. They likewise agreed, both to petition Parliament themselves, and to address a Circular Letter to the Superintendents of the Wesleyan Circuits in England, calling their attention to the subject, and requesting them, if their views coincided with those entertained by the London District Meeting, and the Committees on Education, &c., (with the President of the Conference at their head,) to promote petitions to Parliament from the congregations under their care. It was found that, with very few exceptions, the views of the country Preachers and of their friends did thus coincide with those expressed in the London petitions and circulars; and the consequence was a very extensive and efficient Connexional movement.

The second and third of the Resolutions passed by the united Committees, will explain one of the principal objections (though not the only one) against the Government measure:—

“II. That in addition to several other objections, which deserve the most grave and deliberate consideration, this Meeting is of opinion that the said scheme involves a direct violation of the first principles of our Protestant constitution; inasmuch as it contemplates the employment, by the State, of Romish (among other) teachers, and particularly recognises the corrupted Romish translations of the holy Scriptures, as of

equal authority with that authorized version which has so long obtained and preserved the suffrage and preference of almost every body of Protestant Christians among us, and is now, in fact, the great external link and badge of English Protestant communion.

“III. That such a practical recognition of the Roman Catholic versions as this scheme involves, is in the highest degree objectionable, not only on account of the unfaithful and perverted renderings which those versions contain, but also, and additionally, because certain notes are generally connected with them, which, in the judgment of all Protestants, inculcate the most pernicious errors in doctrine and practice.”

At Manchester, the “Ministers and office-bearers of the Wesleyan societies,” having agreed to petition Parliament, resolved, that as they could not present their petition through the representatives of their borough, both of them being decided supporters of Government, (and one of them belonging to the Administration,) they would address to them a respectful letter, acquainting them with the fact, that a petition was to be presented, stating some of the reasons which had led to the petition, and requesting their attention to the subject.

In this Letter, or Memorial, after stating their own opinions, (which are substantially the same as the Resolutions already cited,) they proceed to say, in a manner which shows their correct understanding of the relation which an English Member of Parliament and his constituents bear to each other: —“For these, and other reasons, we have waived all minor political views in the determination to oppose this great and threatening evil to the utmost of our power. We should be most unwilling to interfere with your right and duty, as Members of the Legislature, to vote in such a manner as your deliberate consideration shall incline you; but that deliberate consideration we most earnestly entreat. We beg your most serious and patient attention to the subject, before you consent to a measure which so many of your constituents deprecate, not only as prejudicial to their own best and dearest interests, but as compromising the national religion, and therefore the national usefulness and honour.”

The great principle of the entire movement of the Wesleyans in opposition to the Government plan is, that in their judgment it compromises that national Protestantism which, recognised and established by the constitution of the country, is placed as the foundation on which the Monarchy rests, and by which the

whole social system is supported. The movement may be a mistaken one, but it is honest. It is what it professes to be, Protestant, and Protestant only. It has no other source than it professes, no other objects than it describes. That it opposes and weakens the governing party, arises only from the fact, that the members of that party have, unhappily, allied themselves with Papists, and sought to purchase their support by measures which shall strengthen the interests of the Papacy. There may be religionists in the kingdom who will say, "Let the Papacy alone, lest you weaken the Ministers;" but the Wesleyans say, "We shall oppose the encroachments of the Papacy; and if by allying themselves to the Papacy, the Ministers are opposed by our Protestant movements, the fault is theirs, not ours. If they choose to identify their interests with the interests of Popery, they must take the consequence." Mere partisanship follows the *men* any where and every where, and boasts of its consistency; but an honest attachment to *principle* says to the men, "If you leave your principles, we do not choose to accompany you."

By some, indeed, the movement in question has been described as being what they choose to term "political." I might content myself with an absolute denial of the assertion; a denial couched in the strongest and most explicit terms that I can employ. By many who made the charge it was never—not for a single moment—believed: but as it relates to public transactions, they did not think it inconsistent with their religious professions to relax the rules by which their speech would be governed in private life, and to make charges which, though *utterly groundless*, were likely to produce an impression among certain classes of readers. I refer to the pure nonsense about what was called "*the Toryism*" in which, it was said, the Wesleyan opposition to the Government plan originated. The extent of the opposition disproves the allegation at once. In all such matters, Wesleyans think for themselves; and whatever influence their Ministers possess, would be destroyed by any attempt to use it unduly. There was no difficulty in producing among the Wesleyans the recent Protestant movement; a similar attempt on behalf of any political party would be an utter failure. The appeal was made from London to that love of Protestantism which is deep-rooted in the Wesleyan heart every where; and it was received with the honesty with which it was made. The appeal was heard, the case was examined, the necessity of immediate and decided action was seen and acknowledged; and the result was, that

from Wesleyanism in every part of England, there arose a simultaneous, a powerful, and in one sense a successful opposition to the Government measure.

The Government plan was opposed because it was believed to be an unconstitutional concession to a living, active, watchful, and encroaching Popery; and among the grounds of this belief were such facts as these:—The general position of the Government in reference to the Papists, and their repeatedly professed determination, in conducting the Government, to make no difference between Protestantism and Popery;—The coincidence of the Government propositions with the well-known plans of Mr. Wyse, the Roman Catholic Member for Waterford, and now one of the Lords of the Treasury;—and the obvious nature of the plan itself, connected with the tolerably explicit declarations of its proposers and supporters. But, had any doubt remained, its last vestige must have been swept away by the appearance of Mr. O'Connell, who comes forward as the representative—it is to be feared, the fit representative—of Irish Popery; and in letters addressed to the “Ministers and Office-bearers of the Manchester Wesleyan Societies,”—parts of which none but himself could have written,—though other parts seem to have been supplied by others,—he assails, in a style peculiarly his own, the Wesleyans in general, and the memory of John Wesley in particular. For want of a word which will accurately describe the nature of the attack, his own name must come to my aid; he O'Connellizes them.

That he makes a tremendous outcry himself, is very true; and the plaudits, willing and reluctant, of his followers, volunteers and conscripts, aid in raising the outcry to something like the war-whoop with which the Indians are said sometimes to make their onslaught. But Wesleyanism is unmoved. In the walls of what is, we trust, one of the fortresses of Protestantism, nothing like a breach is made. The truth is, that Mr. O'Connell's guns, though by no means short in the supply of powder, are all unshotted, and will do no mischief to Methodism.

It is now, however, our turn. Mr. O'Connell has attacked the Methodists. He has brought heavy charges against them. Those charges shall be examined. With Mr. O'Connell and his ordinary plans we have nothing to do; but if, in examining his charges against Wesley and Wesleyanism, he and his co-adjutors should be found to supply illustrations of the Popery whose advocate he has chosen to be, we are not to blame. Our

position is entirely a defensive one; but in replying to a charge, and especially to a charge like Mr. O'Connell's, made under such circumstances, it is impossible to avoid at least occasional reflections on the witnesses brought forwards to support it. These, however, will be made only when they involve something argumentative. Victory over Mr. O'Connell will not be for a moment sought. We thoroughly understand him. He must not receive a regular retaining fee of some twenty thousand pounds annually from the bitter enemies of Protestantism, without saying something, now and then, to give them pleasure. Were his speeches and addresses confined to his Irish clients, they might safely enough be left with them. But he addresses himself to the English public: and, unhappily, the position of political parties is such, that many are predisposed to receive what is said by one whose aid they are well aware is necessary to preserve them from defeat. They may thus, without being distinctly aware of the reason, receive impressions unfavourable to the character both of the dead and the living; and yet more unfavourable in its bearings on what all sincere Protestants must believe to be the cause of truth. It may be allowed, therefore, to those who are attacked as the Wesleyans have been, by Mr. O'Connell, to offer to the public a few explanations of their own conduct, and a few Strictures on Mr. O'Connell's performances, so far as they are needful for the elucidation and establishment of truth.

I.

THE Wesleyans have opposed the late proposition of Government for national education purposes. As Englishmen, they would not have been altogether without justification, had they objected to this attempt to make the British Government even more republican than that of America. Strictly speaking, no doubt, the plan of having the grant voted by the House of Commons, is perfectly legal: but while the letter of the law is observed, the spirit of the constitution is violated. On a subject so important as National Education, to decide by the vote of one branch of the Legislature, at the recommendation of the Ministers of the Sovereign, seems very much like a government by national representatives under a president. They who set aside hereditary legislators may next set aside an hereditary Sovereign, and say that the president, as well as the representatives, ought to be elected by the people. They who

wish the country to be preserved from those fearful commotions, in which all direct attempts to alter the constitution must unavoidably issue, might have been excused, had they, from the first, objected to the form of proceeding, as opening the door to evils the termination of which will not be witnessed by the generation that is so unhappy as to see their commencement.

But we object to *the principle* of the measure. The great object was to procure a State recognition of Popery as a religious system. When Lord John Russell laid certain papers on the subject before the House of Commons, (on the 12th of February last,) he did not say that the State existed solely for purposes connected with man's civil and social relations; and that, as with the question of religion the State had nothing to do, National Education, so far as interfered with by the Government, must be exclusively secular. Had his Lordship put the question in this form, there must have been a previous discussion of the principle, that the State, as representing the community at large, has nothing to do with religion. His Lordship took other, and, as we think, far higher ground. He did not say, "Teach a child the rule of three, and he will never commit theft. Acquaint him with hydraulics and hydrostatics, and he will never get drunk. Raise him into the higher mathematics, and he is sure to make a good citizen and a good subject." On the contrary, it was for the protecting shield of "religious and moral culture" that he called. He appealed to those Members of the House who might have (as Magistrates) "to put in force the harsher provisions of the law;" and called on them to agree to the establishment of such educational measures as should prevent it from being "justly said, that it was by their neglect and omission that they who fell into vice and crime, came to its commission untaught and uninstructed, *and without the knowledge of their duties either to God or man.*" His Lordship did not call on the country to consider whether this State education should be religious or not; but he did most unequivocally call on the country to agree to a system professedly seeking to prevent crime by the employment of the only effectual remedy, "religious and moral culture;"—the communication to the youthful mind of the country, of "the knowledge of their duties both to God and man." It is not the Wesleyans, therefore, who have introduced religion into the question,—though surely that had been no great crime for Englishmen, who have been taught to believe that their country is a Christian one,—but the question, as laid

before them, (in common with the rest of the community,) was essentially and avowedly religious. It was "religious and moral culture" of which his Lordship spoke. According to him, the object which he contemplated was the instruction of the young in "the knowledge of their duties both to God and man."

The proposed object thus being essentially a religious one, the question arose, By what principles were the details to be examined? And here the Wesleyan petitioners were materially assisted by the fact, that the whole British constitution rests on the acknowledgment of the great truths of religion as held by orthodox and evangelical Protestants, connected with the most decided rejection of Popery. Had the proposed plan contained nothing at variance with this acknowledgment, in itself considered, then the proper inquiry would have been, whether the means by which the principle was to be carried out were in accordance with the actual character which the constitutional acknowledgment of religious truth has worn since the Revolution of 1688. But for this inquiry the necessity has not yet arisen. The Government plan implied, on the very face of it, the recognition of Popery as a religious system; and the explanations of it, given by its proposers and advocates, went to this, that from this liberal recognition neither Socinianism nor Socialism were to be excluded. The Wesleyan petitioners took their stand on the ground marked out by the Constitution. They object to this national recognition of Popery and Socinianism; and they object, especially, to all attempts to procure such a recognition by methods completely opposed to the straight-forward honesty which they have always ascribed to the English character. If the Constitution is wrong, let its alteration be openly sought; but while it remains as it is, all such plans as those for National Education ought to be in harmony with it. If the Constitution be right, the Wesleyan petitioners are right; and if *they* are wrong, then the Act of Settlement is wrong, and ought to be repealed, and restitution made for all injustice committed under it.

II.

MR. O'CONNELL tells the Wesleyans, that they are no friends to religious liberty; and he represents this hostility as being derived from the Founder of the Wesleyan Society, who, according to his account, was an intolerant, rioting persecutor.

I propose to examine the learned gentleman's statements somewhat more in detail than he has chosen to put them.

And, first, as to the Wesleyans themselves. I, who know them better than Mr. O'Connell does, meet his charge by a direct denial. In the whole compass of the British empire, warmer and truer friends to civil and religious freedom than the Wesleyan Methodists are not to be found. So sincerely are they attached to that genuine freedom which they believe to be one of the choicest gifts of Providence to man, that they are not willing to allow an assertion to the contrary to remain unanswered, even though it be made by Mr. O'Connell, and echoed by his vassals. But there are two or three points in their character which may have deceived Mr. O'Connell. If we may believe him, he himself is a labourer in the cause of liberty; and if we may judge of the end by the means employed to secure it, then, most certainly, we have little sympathy with him; we pursue different objects; we walk in different paths; the issue must prove which was right, and which was wrong. The liberty which the Wesleyans love is based on religion, is guarded by law, is pervaded by truth, and is itself employed in the cause of personal virtue, and social improvement. It is, in fact, the right to do, without restriction or impediment, all that a man ought to do for his own real happiness, and for the well-being of others. It is, therefore, always associated with order, as that order is marked and established, not by the trembling hand and filmed eye, and often warped judgment of man, but by the unerring wisdom, the perfect goodness, and the supreme authority of God. Of genuine liberty it is no figure of speech, but plain and sober truth, to say that the Bible—the written word of God—is the great charter; and one element of that freedom which the Wesleyans love, is the right to possess for themselves copies of this inestimable treasure; to read it in their closets, for their own personal direction and comfort; and in their families, for the direction and comfort of their domestics and children. Let the attempt be made to rob them of this right, and it would soon be seen whether they loved religious freedom or not.

And who is their accuser? The paid advocate of a system of vassalage, himself a vassal among the rest, only wearing a gold collar, instead of a rusty iron one. Among these vassals, the *right* to read God's word is denied, and the *liberty* of reading it, is, as far as possible, placed under restriction. The entire system is one of soul-slavery, so completely affecting the whole

man, that he neither does nor can contribute to the common stock of society equally with those who, like the Wesleyans, possess and use the Bible. Is it to be wondered at, that there are many who think that they, who are not themselves free, whose very soul is chained, have no right to expect an equal participation in the benefits of society, when their ratio of contribution is so tremendously unequal?

Thus attached to the Bible as the Magna Charta of both their spiritual and social freedom, the Wesleyans believe, that as spiritual liberty extends, civil liberty will be likewise extended. They are persuaded of the reality and importance of those declarations of the great Lord and Master: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." They believe, that the possession of this so invigorates, so ennobles the man, that, when it is extensively enjoyed in any country, despotism cannot exist: they believe, therefore, that the surest way to promote both civil and religious liberty, is to promote an enlightened, active, scriptural piety. To this their efforts are largely directed. They claim not indeed to be the only labourers in the field; but, though they boast not of their labours, yet there are occasions when they may be permitted to speak of them; occasions when silence would be improper. From the days of their fathers they have not ceased to labour in the cause of truth and virtue, of peace and charity. They have aimed to make men such that the restraints of law should be felt as no greater impediments to useful action, than the road-side fences, which hinder not the traveller in the prosecution of his journey. It is thus that, at length, the difficult problem will be solved for reducing the interference of government and law to the lowest quantity consistent with the security of the governed. This is a problem of which our modern Liberals, as they call themselves, are fond of talking; but it is one which an extended police, and an increased military force, at a large augmentation of expense, prove to be, in their hands, as far from solution as ever; notwithstanding their many promises, and though they have long possessed the supreme power of the country.

The truth is, to adapt a scriptural phrase to my present purpose, "the law is made for the lawless." The more lawless they are, and the more law they want. The aim of the Wesleyans is to make restraining law as needless as possible, by inducing men to put themselves under the restraints of religion. And as instances of their success, Kingswood and Cornwall may

be mentioned. Only let it be supposed that some O'Connell had gone to these places, instead of Wesley and Whitefield; urging the people to an angry and blind demand of **what** they called their rights, instead of wisely explaining and enforcing their personal duties; and who can doubt as to the result?

Then there is another error into which Mr. O'Connell has fallen. He confounds, as do many others, political power with personal freedom. All have equally a right to that liberty by which man may do all that really conduces to his well-being; and one of the principal objects of government is to secure him in its possession and enjoyment. The right to possess power is purely conventional, and must be modified by the end for which all government is instituted,—the good of the governed. An illustration of this is furnished by our own Trial by Jury. Every man has a right to justice; a right, for instance, to an honest verdict in the case which he brings before the Court. And this right is unaffected by either his position in society, or by the opinions which he entertains. But has every man a right to demand a seat in the jury-box, whether supposed to be fit for the place or not? And because a certain class is thought to be, on the whole, fittest for the purpose, is the man whose position in society does not entitle him to be summoned, deprived thereby of any of his rights? Is political power to be so extended as to endanger the rights connected with personal freedom? Restrictions on the former may be advocated by those who are the most warmly attached to the latter, and advocated for this very reason,—that they are so attached.

Here again come the plans adopted by the Wesleyans, in common with their fellow-Protestants. They aim at the enlightenment and reformation of the poor, and the consequent elevation of their political position. They have laboured, indeed, under many disadvantages; they have had, and still have, to contend with the powerful counteractions of a debasing, yet stimulating, infidelity, which now seeks especially to establish itself among the working classes of the community: but sufficient success has attended their labours to show the real tendency of their operations. They who spread religion throughout the land, make personal liberty sacred. It is seen and acknowledged to be God's gift to man, and to be held, till forfeited by proved crime, *jure divino*. In a Protestant country, at all events, he who is, in the equally significant and emphatic language of Scripture, "the Lord's freeman,"* is too

* Απελευθερος Κυριου. 1 Cor. vii. 22.

much respected to be either despised, or thrown aside as valueless. Even the thoughtful Pagan could perceive this, "Who, therefore, is the gentleman? He that is well composed by nature unto virtue. It is by the mind that the man is made noble; so that from any condition soever, it is allowable and possible for him to rise above fortune." * And one who was far greater than Seneca, and from whose decision Mr. O'Connell will scarcely appeal, asserts, that "the good man is free, though he serve; and the bad man, though he reign, is a slave; and such an one is the slave not of one man only, but, what is still worse, of as many tyrants as he has vices." † It is thus, by the moral and intellectual elevation of the individual, that while the various distinctions of social rank shall still remain, they shall exist without those exclusions by which, hitherto, it has been found necessary to guard them. A country, thoroughly pervaded with Christian truth, morality, and kindness, at once provides the greatest number of labourers for State service; and by the spirit of humility, moderation, and uprightness which it diffuses, renders the most extensive diffusion of political power not only safe, but even beneficial. I can easily conceive of a state of society justifying the unlimited extension of the elective franchise; and to this, I believe, true religion directly tends; however slowly the vices of men may occasion it to move. Establishing the throne, by producing an enlightened and conscientious submission to law; and elevating the subject, by imparting the wisdom which is pure, and peaceable, and full of good fruits; the integrity which repels all temptations to crime; that true public spirit which is but another name for the fraternal charity of the Bible, and which walks by the rule, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others;" and that self-control which not only subdues the passions, but restrains the tongue from evil-speaking, lying, and slander:—true religion thus strengthens and defends the pedestal of society, and adds both safety and ornament to its capital. When every man is intent on his own rights, and eager in demanding them, the whole country soon resembles a vast

* "*Quis ergo generosus? Ad virtutem benè a natura compositus.*" Change one word only, using it in a Christian sense, and a great scriptural truth instantly appears.—"Who, therefore, is the gentleman? He who is *by grace* well composed unto virtue." "*Animus facit nobilem; cui ex quacunque conditione supra fortunam licet surgere.*" Seneca, Epist. xlv.

† "*Proinde bonus, etiamsi serviat, liber est; malus autem, etiamsi regnet, servus est; nec unius hominis, sed, quod est gravius, tot dominorum, quot vitiorum.*" Aug. Civ. Dei., lib. iv., cap. 3.

intrenchment. Commerce languishes, agriculture is neglected, and law is unheard amidst the clash of arms. Religion takes another course, and does the work at once by bringing the conscience under its holy obligations. When all men do their duty, all men will enjoy their rights.

Accused of being the foes of freedom, we claim to look at the country of our accuser; and in its present character to mark some of the effects of his movements in favour of civil and religious liberty. And one glance is enough. We pass by the selfish, avaricious despotism of political agitators, and rhetorical artificers. They say what it suits them to say; though even these may find they have evoked a demon who, when he becomes furious, shall make them his first victims, unless they become his obedient slaves, as they thought they were his potent masters. But we look at the land; and one terrible, but undeniable, characteristic every where presents itself. *There is a universal carelessness of blood.* Among the Jews, when murder had been committed in any district, by some person or persons unknown, all the solemnities of religion were employed to proclaim abhorrence of the crime. God constituted himself the Guardian of human life; and, by his righteous law, they who sympathized with the murderer shared in his guilt. But in Ireland what spot is there from which the voice of blood ascends not up before Him? Assassination is popularly no crime; and the murderer stalks abroad with impunity, and every where finds sympathy and shelter. Whether the exciting occasion be political or agrarian, is a question which, in the view I am taking of the case, is not worth spending a moment to discuss. The fact itself is no more to be concealed, than the blazing of a volcano at midnight. And it constitutes one grand distinction between the two islands. In England we have enough of ignorance, and vice, and crime, to occasion the deepest regret, and to demand the application of the most enlightened and energetic means of prevention and cure. But we have no sympathy with murder. Robbery may lead to blood, but blood is not that which was at first contemplated. Assassination has not yet become one of our trades. With all our faults, our national feeling as to the sacredness of life is strictly scriptural. In Ireland, unhappily, the reverse is the case. Blood is shed, not only with a frequency, but with a coolness, that renders it but too evident that the fences which should guard the life of man, are all trodden underfoot. But we turn from the view with feelings which men like Mr. O'Connell cannot

understand, and the expression of which would only elicit their angry contempt. We say no more, therefore, than that we see nothing in Ireland to make us change our own views of the real nature of political and personal freedom, or of the means by which the enjoyment of either is to be secured.

And in these views, other and very different scenes confirm us. We remember the sneer with which it was said to Whitefield and Wesley, "If you want to convert Heathens, go to Kingswood." We remember, too, the state of Cornwall when our fathers went there to preach the words of truth and love, of honesty and peace. It is at once admitted, that they did not collect congregations for the purposes of political discussion; and that when chapels were erected, they did not become the centres of political agitation; but what has been the consequence as to the security of property and person? And what would have been the consequence if, instead of such preaching as the Kingswood Colliers and Cornish Miners heard from Whitefield and Wesley, they had had a succession of O'Connells? As to the former question, it is not enough to say, that the great object of all Government, security of property and life, is there fully enjoyed; there is, in addition, a moral respectability, an intelligence, an orderly independence, a just appreciation of the comforts of decency, sobriety, and cleanliness, a due regard for the rights of others, and a steady, compassionate attention to their wants,—all that tends to make society happy, and to secure its freedom by making its freedom worth possessing. This is what Methodism has done for Kingswood and Cornwall. I write for Englishmen, and not for Mr. O'Connell; and, therefore, while I say that his charge against us (as Englishmen) of hating his countrymen, is one of those malignant falsehoods in which he always seems most at home; yet, even our wishes for the welfare of Ireland, strong as they are, shall not make us unjust to a class of men whom no good Government would either wish or need to coerce, and no bad Government be long able to enslave. We will not insult the Miners of Cornwall, nor the Colliers of Kingswood, by instituting any comparison between them, and the unhappy dupes and victims of Irish political agitation. Happy would it be if Governments and Political Economists were more ready to acknowledge, what is proved beyond all honest dispute, both negatively and positively, by such facts as are furnished by Papistical Ireland, on the one hand, and Methodistical Kings-

wood and Cornwall,* on the other, that, where the true religion of Jesus Christ, in its light and power, is brought to bear, first, upon the individual, and through the individual, upon the public, its effects are as salutary, as decisive, and as strongly marked on the external relations and aspects of society, as they are upon the principles, character, and condition of individuals.

Against the charge, then, of being unfriendly to civil and religious freedom, the Wesleyans thus defend themselves:— They say, First, that they have laboured to implant such principles in the mind, as that the various regulations of Government and law should constitute no actual restraint upon personal freedom. They say, Secondly, that they have laboured to make men such, as that the interference of Government, and the restraints of law, might safely be reduced to the lowest possible quantity, consistent with the preservation of society against the aggressions of individual wickedness, or of foreign cupidity and ambition. Men require very little government, and feel still less of it, who are accustomed to rule over their own hearts in the fear of God, to govern their lives by the word of God, and to see in every man a neighbour whom they are to love as themselves. And then, Thirdly, the Wesleyans say, that, as the direct tendency of all their proceedings is to give men an interest in the peace, the stability, and the prosperity of the community at large; and, by personal enlightenment and integrity, to fit them for the safe and even beneficial exercise of civil privileges; so their proceedings must ultimately lead, not only to the enjoyment of the largest measures of personal freedom, but to the widest diffusion of political power. They say, in a word, not boastingly, but as compelled to it in their own defence, that, when the pure Christianity of the New Testament can be proved to be unfriendly to civil and religious freedom, PROPERLY UNDERSTOOD, then,

* I shall not be misunderstood in thus referring to Cornwall and Kingswood, as though wishing to intimate that Methodism, as a sect, had done this great work, and was, therefore, the exclusive instrument. I only take these particular cases as illustrative of general principles. Wesleyanism has only been the vehicle by means of which a certain influence has been exerted upon large masses of men, under peculiar circumstances. Up and down the country the same great truths on which the Wesleyan Ministers insisted, have been faithfully preached by others, both in the Established Church and among the Dissenters, and always with the same effects. The connexion between the grain of wheat sown, and the ear of wheat reaped, is not more certain than the connexion between the great principles of Christianity as preached by Whitefield and Wesley, and the personal happiness, domestic comfort, social respectability, and civil freedom of man.

but not till then, may it be proved that so is Wesleyan Methodism.

Before I leave this part of my subject, I must explain a circumstance, the misconception of which may, probably, have led to what, I would fain hope, are only misrepresentations, occasioned by mistake.

The Wesleyans, then, are to be regarded not only as members of a united religious society, but as, individually, members of civil society. Now, considered in this latter point of view, they have, in all civil matters, to form their own judgment, and to act accordingly. The rules of the religious society to which they belong, interfere no further with their civil position than to enforce the civil obedience, and respect to civil rulers, which the Christian Scriptures explicitly and authoritatively enjoin. The great principles of the religious system which they have embraced, may suggest to them rules for their guidance, in those purely civil transactions in which, from time to time, they may have to engage; but that is all. In those civil transactions, therefore, they engage individually, as Englishmen, not as Wesleyans. And as they lay no claim to any thing like infallibility, it often happens that in those political matters, the occurrence of which the construction of English society so frequently occasions, they are found to hold different opinions among themselves, and to range themselves even on opposite sides. And in such transactions their Ministers have neither the power nor the wish to interfere. If advice be asked of them, it will be frankly given: though, even in this case, it will mostly be found, that that advice will refer rather to general principles, than to their particular application; and that what will be the most earnestly impressed on the mind, will be the necessity of preserving the Christian spirit, maintaining the Christian character, and acting in consistency with Christian objects and rules. The Wesleyan Ministers claim no power of haranguing, and vituperating, and cursing, from the altars of God; nor of driving up herds of voters to an election, nor of refusing the services of religion to the members of their society on merely political causes. And the Wesleyans themselves, fully conscious of their own political freedom, cannot forbear smiling when they hear themselves decried as "that most illiberal sect," who are "the enemies to civil and religious liberty," and recollect, that among their accusers the most abject and degrading slavery exists. Friends of liberty, indeed! Men who, when curses will not operate on the mind that superstition

has debased, understand very well the use both of the horsewhip and the fist ! * The truth is, the Wesleyans detest all slavery ; and therefore it is that, even in their character as individual members of the great civil community of the land, amidst a large variety of opinions on political subjects, they are, almost to a man, agreed in their opposition to Popery.

But the Wesleyan Methodists have an associated character ; and in this, it is a sacred rule with them to abstain from all merely political movements. Their religious Connexion they believe to be established for religious purposes, and for religious purposes only ; and to these, therefore, their Connexional movements are strictly confined. I have myself conversed with many persons, of all shades, almost, of political opinion, but on this point I have always found the most perfect agreement to prevail. Not even for their own favourite political object, whatever it might be, did I ever know any persons among us wish a Connexional movement to be instituted. Whether or not they have ever been mistaken in the application of the principle, to the principle itself they have never ceased to declare their resolution to adhere. Long experience and extensive observation have convinced me, that by no people under heaven is that solemn declaration of our Lord, " My kingdom is not of this world," better understood, or, in its practical developement, more justly appreciated, than by the Wesleyan Methodists. The proof given to Pilate, that Christ's kingdom was not a worldly one, was, that his disciples acted not in a worldly manner. As a political system would have required political disciples, so politically-acting disciples would have proved the system, to which they were attached, to be a political one.

Associated, thus, for religious purposes, the Wesleyans

* About twenty years ago, in a British colony, I was writing at a table by an open window, (level with the street,) when, hearing a great noise, I raised my head, and saw a female with disordered clothes, and her hair hanging loosely over her shoulders, walking by the side of the Priest, on the road to the Chapel. " O have mercy on me, your Reverence," was the repeated cry of the woman, responded to by,— " Come along, you hussey,—you trull,—come along." They had scarcely passed the window when he, a strong, burley man,—one of the friends of liberty of course,—tired of the cry for mercy, doubled his fist, and struck the woman a blow on the side of her head, which sent her staggering to the other side of the road. " Take that, and be quiet," was the language of the fellow, and after that, certainly, she did accompany him quietly. She had been attempting to elope from her husband, and the Constable-Priest was conducting her to the penance-house. Liberty must be sadly off for friends, to require such patronage as this.

devote all the strength which their union affords, to religious objects ; satisfied that by promoting these, those objects which are temporal and subordinate shall be most effectually secured. And in this great work they endeavour, as they have opportunity, to keep pace with their brethren of other denominations. In Sabbath-schools, Tract Societies, in seeking to promote a taste for useful reading, and to supply it with materials ; in institutions for visiting and relieving the various forms of sickness and poverty ; in labours to promote village preaching ; in Missionary operations, contemplating all quarters of the globe : they are endeavouring to employ themselves, according to their proportion of means and opportunities. In fact, so completely are they occupied in reference to the various branches of the great work which every true Christian desires to forward, that they have scarcely either leisure or strength for objects of inferior importance.

Occasionally, indeed, they have believed it to be their duty to employ their Connexional influence for the attainment of some public object ; but then it has been when they believed that public object to be a religious one. They thus employed it in reference to the right of sending Missionaries to India, to the Sabbath-question, to Government participation in Indian Idolatry. They employed it, likewise, in the great question of Slavery ; and they employed it, for the same reason, because it was a religious question. They came to it, not as though they had been the disciples of the puling and sentimental Rousseau, or of the boldly-infidel Paine. They had always understood that the nation, in its corporate character, professed the religion of the Bible, and, standing on that ground, and insisting on the moral evil of slavery, they called on the Legislature to act as it became a Legislature professing Christianity. And this was the ground on which the battle was fought and won. It was Christianity that put down slavery. Mere political declamations about civil rights would have been as powerless in England, as they are to this day in America.

Perhaps I may refer to another fact, as illustrative of this determination of the Wesleyans to confine their *Connexional movements* to religious objects. It is well known that they had a strong and almost unanimous feeling on the subject of what was called, "Catholic Emancipation ;" but still, as the question related, not to any recognition of Popery, religiously considered, but to the admission into certain political offices of persons professing the Roman Catholic religion, who were to

declare, by a solemn oath, that they would not employ any power which the Relief Act might give them, to injure the religious institutions of the country, it was, in their view, only a political one, and as such they dealt with it. The Wesleyan Conference adopted no measures on the question. The oneness of opinion and feeling, indeed, was so great, that the movement appeared as much like a Connexional one, as it could be not to be Connexional; but still it was only the movement of Wesleyan individuals, opposing the measure on this very ground, that Popery is essentially and unchangeably hostile to civil and religious liberty; that it enslaves its own vassals; and that it only talks about liberty in Protestant countries for the sake of creating confusion and strife, and thus of promoting the one never-forgotten object,—the restoration of former ascendancy and power over Protestants.

In the present case, the question is most decidedly a religious one. The Government-plan professes, indeed, to make religion the basis of the National Education; but then it is religion as explained on the widest and wildest latitudinarianism. It is to be religion so completely generalized, as to be no particular religion at all. Orthodox and Evangelical Protestants, Romanists, Jews, Socinians, Socialists, Deists, all are to be recognised. It is worse than mockery thus to talk of religion. And the more so, as, among the principal defenders of the scheme, a favourite maxim is, "The State has nothing to do with religion;" and one of their most common arguments is, that the State must recognise the principles of those who contribute to its support. If, therefore, any persons wished to have morals taught without any reference to the authority and will of God, (and even to this did some of the advocates of the measure come in debating upon it,) morals, because of their own beauty, or their supposed advantages to society; in a word, did they wish even for Atheism, Atheism must be recognised. A country whose legislation rests on such principles as these, may have many Christians in it, but the country itself, in its politically-collective character, is Christian no longer. The Wesleyans have often expressed their thankfulness that, notwithstanding many national errors and sins, the great principles of the Christian religion have hitherto been acknowledged by the Constitution; and they have, therefore, unitedly and heartily set themselves in opposition to a scheme which entirely, and very greatly for the worse, changes its character. And they have done so, not because they are unfriendly, or even indifferent,

to civil and religious freedom ; but because they think that the orthodox and evangelical Protestantism which the Constitution now acknowledges to be the revealed truth of God, is its completest safeguard. They are old-fashioned enough to believe, that true Protestantism goes hand in hand with true liberty ; and that the Whigs of 1688 knew what they said when they asserted the close, if not the indissoluble, connexion of Popery with arbitrary power.

III.

HITHERTO I have referred chiefly to what may be considered as matters of opinion ; and as such I have dealt with them. The reader will be in possession of Mr. O'Connell's charge, and of my defence ; and will form his own judgment on this part of the case. I dismiss it, therefore, by saying, that as there is no disputing about tastes, so the Romanists may imagine that their religious system is a most beautiful scheme, both of liberty and liberality. The Wesleyans are of a different opinion ; and are opposed to Popery, (among other reasons,) because Popery is opposed to liberty. And, while they are thankful for those wonderful providences which marked the progress of the Reformation, and delivered their Protestant ancestors from antichristian tyranny, they believe that their duty is clearly marked out by a text of Scripture, the principle of which utterly condemns the revival of Judaic externalism in any form, or under any name : "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

I must now, leaving these matters of opinion, come to certain matters of fact. In the month of June, 1780, a Society called the "Protestant Association," having agreed, by the advice of Lord George Gordon, their President, to proceed *en masse* to Westminster, to present to the House of Commons their petition against what they termed "the encroachments of Popery," an alarming riot broke out, which lasted for several days ; and in which, as usual, great crimes were perpetrated, and great mischief done. A particular description of these riots is not necessary. It is sufficient to say, that all the accounts we have of the Protestant riots of 1780, represent them to have been of the same character as the Radical riots at Bristol in our own day.

Mr. O'Connell lays the principal guilt of these transactions at the door of the Wesleyan Methodists. He says, "The great **INSTIGATOR** of that Protestant Association, *both in the pulpit and through the press*, was that Wesley whose name you bear; *and the first page of your political history is stained with the plunderings, the burnings, the destruction of property, the bloodshed, and the fearful insurrection of 1780.*"

But his entire charge must be laid before the reader in his own words.

"You would have departed widely, indeed, from the principles of the remarkable man who formed your society, if you were not active enemies of freedom of conscience; as your founder, the Rev. John Wesley, exhibited *the most ardent, but melancholy, zeal in the cause of intolerance*. He was, in 1779, one of the principal **FOUNDERS or MANAGERS** of that 'Protestant Association' which, in June, 1780, very nearly achieved the destruction of London, by one of those insurrections which are in the present day called '*émeutes*.' The Protestant mob had, it is well known, possession of the city of London for nearly six days, destroyed not only the houses of Catholics, and their property, but the Catholic chapels, *and also much Protestant property, and the prisons of the metropolis*. **THE GREAT INSTIGATOR OF THAT PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION WAS THAT WESLEY WHOSE NAME YOU BEAR**; and the first page of your political history is stained with the plunderings, the burnings, the destruction of property, the bloodshed, and the fearful insurrection of June, 1780."

The above is from his *First Letter*. In his *Second*, he thus returns to the charge:—"It is also true, that I made strong and severe charges against John Wesley, whom you denominate '*venerable*.' I charged him, that, in 1779, he was one of the principal founders or managers of that Protestant Association, which, in June 1780, raised a rebellion in London; plundered, destroyed, and burned private houses, and chapels, the residences of Judges, and public prisons; attacked the bank and the palace, and left the streets of London crimsoned with human blood."

There is another charge growing out of this first one, but I shall consider it separately. At present, I confine myself to this, that Mr. Wesley "was one of the principal founders or managers of that Protestant Association, which, in June, 1780, raised a rebellion in London." And, lest it should be supposed

that he did not mean to charge him with rebellion itself, but only with having founded or managed the Association that was guilty of it, he says, "The great *Instigator* of that Protestant Association, both in the pulpit and through the press, was that Wesley whose name you bear; and the first page of *your* political history is stained with the plunderings, the burnings, the destruction of property, the bloodshed, and the fearful insurrection of June, 1780." Language can scarcely be more explicit than this, in asserting the direct connexion of Wesley and Wesleyanism, on the one hand, and the London riots of 1780, with all their crimes, on the other. But even that more explicit language Mr. O'Connell employs. He is resolved that it shall not be supposed that he only meant to say that Mr. Wesley had been connected with the Protestant Association; and that the Protestant Association having taken a step which led to the June riots, Mr. Wesley might be said, indirectly, to have occasioned the riots themselves. He charges Mr. Wesley with being "THE GREAT INSTIGATOR of THAT Protestant Association," whose crimes he had just described; and adds the words I have already quoted two or three times, but which I quote again, that they may not be forgotten, "The great instigator," &c., "was that Wesley whose name you bear; AND the first page of your political history is stained with the plunderings, the burnings, the bloodshed, &c., of June, 1780."

In his Second Letter, however, he uses even more explicit language still. That language—it is peculiarly his own—shall be quoted. And in quoting it, I cannot help putting the remark, that Ireland *once* sent to the British Parliament and Bar, gentlemen and orators. Ireland sent us Burke, and Sheridan, and Grattan, and Curran. Ireland *now* sends us O'Connell!

He says, "Gentle Pharisees, I thank you. You have been well described in emphatic language by the most awful authority. How I enjoy the sanctimonious hypocrisy of your malignant piety! It makes you adepts in the worst of arts, vituperative calumny. I doubt much whether the most skilful dame of the fish-market may not be edified, as well as instructed, by the rancour of your scolding. And yet I think I see you turning up towards heaven the well-practised whites of your eyes, and hear you exclaiming against me for being intemperate and abusive. It is truly quite consistent with your habits and manner; First, to use the most unmeasured calumny, and, Secondly, to accuse the victim of your abuse with the very

crime you commit against him. I admit that in this you are the genuine followers of your prototype, John Wesley ; who, as I have shown, first roused the Protestant mob to burn the houses of the Catholics, and then accused the Catholics of having themselves burned their own houses."

On the peculiar style of this paragraph, I make no comment. Mr. O'Connell is, certainly, the best judge on two subjects ; First, in what style he himself feels most at home ; and the above paragraph is evidently penned *con amore* ; Secondly, what will best please his followers, for whom, of course, these Letters are written. All this, however, I pass by ; only requesting to the paragraph itself the particular attention of such of my Wesleyan readers as have wished to reconcile their political predilections to their Protestantism, by indulging the hope that Popery and Papists have undergone a change. The man that could pen a paragraph like the one I have quoted, would, had he the opportunity, not only deliver the heretic to the secular power, to be dealt with according to law, but would follow his victim to the stake, and insult him there. Mr. O'Connell boils over with hatred of Protestantism, and is, in this respect, a proof and illustration of the unchanged character of the system which he advocates and represents.

But I quoted the paragraph for the sake of the utterly-unmistakeable form in which he states his charge against Mr. Wesley. He "ROUSED THE PROTESTANT MOB TO BURN THE HOUSES OF THE CATHOLICS." Mr. Wesley instigated the Protestant Association, both in the pulpit and by the press ; he roused the Protestant mob to burn the houses of the Catholics ; and thus, the first page of the political history of Wesleyanism is stained with plunder, destruction, rebellion, and blood !

In his Second Letter, Mr. O'Connell says, that of his charges he had already given the proofs. "I gave you dates and circumstances." I turn to the First Letter. He gives some of the dates relating to the proceedings of the Protestant Association, and of the riots of 1780. But what "dates and circumstances" has he given, which, according to him, implicate Mr. Wesley in the transactions which he condemns ? JUST ONE ! One date, and one circumstance. The *circumstance* is, that "the Association presented their unanimous thanks to John Wesley, for his exertions in their cause : " the *date* is, that this resolution of thanks was presented to Mr. Wesley "on the 17th of February, 1780," very near upon four months before the riots

broke out ! This is what Mr. O'Connell,—who, from his being styled usually, “the *learned* member for Dublin,” is, I suppose, a lawyer,—this is what Mr. O'Connell calls “giving dates and circumstances” in support of charges utterly destructive of the religious and moral character of the man against whom they are directed. “I gave you dates and circumstances.” It is untrue. He confines himself to *one* of each ; in fact, to one statement, with its date. Let this be examined.

As the case is put by Mr. O'Connell, the evidence is this : “On the 17th of February, 1780, the Protestant Association presented their unanimous thanks to Mr. Wesley, for his exertions in their cause.” The deductions from this are, *therefore*, Mr. Wesley was one of the principal founders or managers of the Association in 1779 ; *therefore*, he was its “great instigator” in the work of plunder, insurrection, and bloodshed ; *therefore*, he roused the Protestant mob to burn the houses of the Catholics. All this Mr. O'Connell asserts, and triumphantly exclaims, “I gave you dates and circumstances ;” thinking, I suppose, that the readers of his Second Letter would not trouble themselves to turn to the First ; or hoping that, if they did, they would confound all the dates and circumstances together, and take for granted that they were all material, and related directly to the charge against Mr. Wesley. “I gave you dates and circumstances.” If a man were to accustom himself to speak thus loosely in private life, he would soon be shunned by every honourable neighbour that he had ; and he who chooses to write thus loosely on public matters must be told, that his allegations meet with a reply, not to shield the character of another, but to expose the principles of his own. My object in writing is not so much to defend Wesley and Wesleyanism, as to show the English reader the real character of Popery, as exemplified in Mr. O'Connell.

Just a word more on the single fact which he adduces in evidence. Had he read—and *has he not read?*—with any degree of attention, the account of the trial of Lord George Gordon, for high-treason, in instigating the Association (so the indictment alleged) to riotous proceedings, he would have found that the Attorney-General, who conducted the prosecution, used these remarkable words : having referred to the fears entertained by some persons of danger to the Protestant religion, he added : “Upon this ground, a petition was determined upon ; and if they (the Association) apprehended danger, they did right to petition ; it is the inherent right of the subject to

petition Parliament ; and whenever they imagine a case proper for the consideration of Parliament, they do right to bring it before them : *and I believe this petition was at one time intended to have been presented in a legal, constitutional, and orderly manner.*" He then referred to Lord George Gordon, to whose incitement and encouragement he attributed what had taken place. Thus, even upon the trial for high-treason of the *President* of the Association, the *Association itself* is described as having, up to a certain (not mentioned) period, only intended to present a petition in a constitutional manner. And the Rev. Erasmus Myddleton, a pious Clergyman, being examined for the prisoner, deposed that he was one of the Committee of the Association, and that he had never heard the prisoner (whose conduct he had closely watched) use any disloyal language, or intimate any wish for the repeal of the Bill by force of arms, or intimidation. In fact, there is not the least proof whatever that rioting was contemplated before it actually broke out. At all events, in February, 1780, it is plain that, whatever Lord George Gordon might think, the Committee of the Association thought only of presenting a petition to Parliament, constitutionally and peacefully ; and as, just before that, Mr. Wesley had published a pointed Tract on the relation which Popish principles bear to a Protestant Government, they, an Association in defence of the Protestant religion, voted their thanks to him. The formation of such a Society might be wise or foolish, necessary or useless ; but in February, 1780, their plan was, having addressed the nation, (in November, 1779,) now to petition Parliament. Their resolution of thanks to Mr. Wesley proves that they thought his Tract a good one ; but it does not connect *them*, much less *him*, with the riots which ensued four months after, or their Resolution that the whole Protestant Association should assemble in St. George's Fields, to accompany their President, who, in his place in Parliament, was to present their petition.

And here I might pause. I might say, that I had examined the "dates and circumstances" brought forward by our accuser, and found them to have no reference whatever to his charges. But, as Mr. O'Connell has chosen to bring the subject forwards, he must take the consequences that may result from its full investigation. He has not charged Mr. Wesley with having imprudently praised an Association, which afterwards did wrong, but with having been guilty of what the Methodists

Believe to be crimes,—real, atrocious crimes. To stir up a mob, or to incite a private association, to deeds of plunder, destruction, insurrection, blood, is, in their judgment, a heinous offence, both against God and man. And of this offence, (of *instigating* and *rousing* to rapine, to rebellion, and murder,) Daniel O'Connell has accused John Wesley !

Nor is that all. The Wesleyans are represented as like-minded with their founder. Thus,—and I beg the most serious attention of my Wesleyan readers to the two insulting paragraphs which I will now quote,—

“No men, however, can have a *greater store of bad characters than you have among yourselves* ; and therefore it is no great generosity in you to bestow one of them gratuitously upon me.” (Second Letter.)

“At the present moment, you could no more get up an insurrectionary movement against the Catholics, *as you did in 1780*, than you could subvert the throne, or the constitution.” (First Letter.)

The Wesleyans, who abound in bad characters, got up, in 1780, an insurrectionary movement against the Catholics. This Mr. O'Connell distinctly asserts. And what answer shall I give? For once, he shall assist me. He says, in his Second Letter,—“I tell you at once what I call such an assertion—an emphatic, but short word—a monosyllable. There are two hundred and one of you ; you may share it amongst you, foolish — as you are !”

He hints the monosyllable, but retains it, knowing well that, had he used it, we should have hurled it back on him, and called all England to testify, whether, in England or Ireland, there is one man to whom it more appropriately belongs.

But it really is amusing to hear all this outcry. I cannot help thinking, that when Mr. O'Connell penned his Letters, he laughed at them himself.—“Here am I, Daniel O'Connell, gravely charging John Wesley with the crime of managing an Association, and rousing the passions of a mob !” Why, even if Mr. Wesley had been all that he is thus represented to have been, if Mr. O'Connell had had the least conception of the meaning of another monosyllable—*SHAME*—he would never have brought forward the charge. If he had understood the English character, he would—to borrow an expression from Mr. Brougham's speech on Russian interference with Spanish affairs—he would have boxed the whole compass of political subjects before he came forward as the public accuser of Mr.

Wesley, for having—sixty years ago—(supposing him guilty of all that is thus laid to his charge)—founded and managed an Association for the purpose of securing Protestant objects, and appealed to the passions of the mob, for the purpose of intimidating the legislature. Does Mr. O'Connell know nothing of another Association? Has he never appealed to the passions of his countrymen: and having roused them, held out their power as a threat to the Government, if his demands were not conceded? He reminds us of those who sought to procure a sentence of condemnation against an unhappy offender, but who only heard the words, "He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone." They, indeed, went out, one by one, being convinced in their own consciences; but he, by the very fact of bringing forwards the charge, has shown a recklessness prepared to outface everything.

I was, at first, somewhat surprised at all this rancour against Mr. Wesley. I could account for the attack on the Wesleyans. They had stood in the way of the advance of the Popish array, and were to expect to have their character assailed. The great maxim of Popery is, "Give the dog a bad name." It is thus that Wicliff's character was blackened: thus that the Council of Prague dealt with John Huss, and Jerome of Prague: thus that Luther has been maligned: and thus it is that Mr. O'Connell, in one of his later Letters, thinking that his support of the Melbourne administration has purchased for him the liberty of insulting Protestantism with impunity, has DARED to call Cranmer an "indescribable monster of criminality." But what had Mr. Wesley done? Was his character to be ruined because his followers, fifty years after his death, objected to the alteration of our Protestant Constitution? And ruined it is, even in the eyes of his followers, IF Mr. O'Connell has told the truth. Whatever HE may think of rousing men to plunder, rebellion, and bloodshed, they believe such conduct to be utterly inconsistent, not only with religion, but with common morality.

And yet, this is the charge now brought against him, fifty years after his own death, and sixty after the transactions are said to have occurred! And how brought against him? Mr. O'Connell's Letters betray the eagerness with which he seeks to bring down Mr. Wesley from the elevation in which his character has hitherto been placed, to the level of a mere political agitator, seeking to secure his object by instigating and arousing his followers to plunder, destruction, insurrection, and

blood. This is the attempt. Most signally has it failed. But the attempt itself discovers the *animus* with which it was made. Mr. Wesley was, in the best sense of the word, a public reformer. A Christian, a scholar, a gentleman, he devoted his life to the laborious task of instructing the poor, and, by purifying their character, of amending their social circumstances, and elevating their social position. And in all this he was disinterested. Success was the reward which he sought. Above half a century did he labour before a watchful public, and from that public he won the acknowledgment that he laboured not for himself. A man of few wants, he gave to the poor all that remained after those few wants had been supplied. He sought nothing for himself; nothing for his family. His zeal was as pure as it was ardent; and, while his only object was to maintain the character of the Christian, he brightly exemplified that of the patriot.

But I will not pursue the subject. Let Mr. O'Connell keep in his own sphere, and not force upon us the task of comparing the man whom we will yet call "venerable," with his accuser and traducer. The Wesleyans themselves will not forget—they ought not to forget—that to prop up a failing cause, the attempt has been made utterly to ruin the character of Mr. Wesley. They ought not to forget it, inasmuch as it furnishes an illustration, which cannot easily be mistaken, of the real principles of the men who are seeking to alter our Protestant Constitution. Let the manner in which Romanists are accustomed to speak of the great worthies of Protestantism be contrasted with their assumed candour when seeking to win Protestants to their own purposes. When necessary, we hear much about candour, and charity, and brotherly love; but the worth of all these professions is shown by the unflinching resolution to traduce the character of Protestants and their leaders, from the days of the Albigenses, of Wicliff, of Cranmer, to those of John Wesley. The system is one and the same. And let the Wesleyans, and the Protestants of England generally, keep this fact in view, when they happen to read some Popish attack on the morals of the Protestants of former days. Let them, when they read attacks on Wicliff or Huss, remember, that in 1839, Mr. O'Connell proclaimed in an English newspaper that the saintly, though not unerring, Cranmer was "an indescribable monster of criminality." Let them come down to later days, and judge of the value of these Papal charges, by remembering that this same Mr. O'Connell,

has accused the venerable Wesley of being a mere political agitator, who instigated and aroused a Protestant mob to plunder, incendiarism, insurrection, and murder. From the character of such charges as these, the character of all similar ones may fairly be inferred.

Mr. O'Connell says in his Second Letter, "I challenge you to the controversy. But you will find it more prudent to shrink from detail, and to confine yourselves to a general and sweeping assertion." There is an audacity, an impudence in this, which the reader will not overlook. When writing that Letter, all that Mr. O'Connell had done in proof of his accusations against Mr. Wesley,—accusations which allege that he aroused a Protestant mob in June, 1780, to burn the houses of the Catholics,—was the statement of a resolution of the Protestant Association Committee, dated more than a quarter of a year earlier, thanking Mr. Wesley for his services. I will put the case thus:—Suppose that some five or six months before the Bristol Radical riots broke out, some professional gentleman, of high character, had published a legal argument in favour of Parliamentary Reform, to the legal argument strictly confining himself. Suppose, next, that the Bristol Political Union had passed a Resolution, thanking the author for his exertions and services in the cause of Reform. Three or four months elapse. The entrance of an unpopular Magistrate into the city, is the occasion of drawing a number of people together. Strong feeling is gradually aroused, and, by a well-known law of human nature, the feeling becomes infectious, rises into passion, and begins to express itself in tumultuous acts, not previously either intended or contemplated. By and by, that class—only too large in our principal cities—which lives by plunder, and is always ready to avail itself of the confusion occasioned by public tumult, becomes the chief actor; and what at first appeared to be only political agitation, never intending any further mischief than the expression of displeasure by missiles, broken windows, and the like, becomes a regular riot, and scenes of plunder, burning, and blood ensue, at which our nature shudders.—The reader will allow me this digression. In days of strong political feeling, the danger of assembling and exciting the populace cannot be too strongly insisted on. No one can tell how far associated passion will go. And where is the place in which hundreds and thousands may not be found, to whom the first symptoms of riot are welcome, as opening the door for rapine and excess? They who begin the riot, seldom

carry it on. Another set of actors take possession of the
 ground; and the first, frightened too late at their own folly,
 try in vain to stem the headlong torrent. It were well for the
 country, if such opinions on the subject of riots were entertained,
 that the man who talked of appealing to physical force, or even
 hinted at it, should be at once, by the judgment of the public,
 declared both unfit and unworthy to serve his country. No man
 has a right thus to trifle with the peace and safety of the commun-
 ity. It may flatter the pride of the political partisan to be able
 to say, that he has a hundred thousand men ready to march: he
 may only mean to overawe; but the force he sets in motion
 may be too strong for him. If he does it on one occasion, his
 opponents may do it on another. And if the political leader
 may excite the people, to terrify his rival to submission, let
 him know that the people may choose to excite themselves: and
 what right has he to condemn them for doing that for them-
 selves, which he threatened they should do for him? What
 may be termed, "the great English riots," all teach the same
 lesson. And if there be any great political truth which ex-
 perience establishes, it is this,—that every political agitator,
 threatening the employment of physical force, is an enemy to
 the public peace, and ought to be declared unfit for any
 public employment. The peaceful inhabitants of the country
 are not to have their property and lives placed in jeopardy,
 that the supposed interests of some political party may be
 promoted. The ignorant poor are not to be taught, that they
 may innocently resort to insurrectionary movements for the
 attainment of what they may imagine to be their rights.
 London, in 1780,—and Bristol, Birmingham,—and we must
 now add Newport, more recently,—have furnished the country
 with admonitions not to be misunderstood, and taught us
 lessons which it were madness to refuse to learn; and it is
 time for every one who loves his country, and wishes not to
 see the crushing desolations of civil war, to call upon his
 fellow-citizens, whatever their political opinions may be, to
 unite in the most determined opposition to these "*physical-
 force*" men. Hitherto, by the merciful providence of God,
 we have been preserved; but "*it is dangerous to play with
 edge tools.*" Whoever either threatens such appeals, or
 chooses to seek support from those who do, must hear the
 united voice of the country—in a land like this, never to be
 resisted—pronouncing the sentence of dismission from all

public employment. They who coquet with traitors, must have the punishment which treason deserves.

But,—to return from this only too-necessary digression,—suppose such argument to have been written, such vote of thanks to have been given, and that, some months subsequently, the Bristol riots had burst forth,—would that vote of thanks prove that the writer had instigated the rioters, and roused them to the commission of the fearful crimes of which it is allowed they were guilty? And yet this is Mr. O'Connell's argument against Mr. Wesley. This is his method of avoiding general and sweeping assertions, “and of proving his case by the adduction of particular facts!”

Were my object the mere defence of Mr. Wesley against what of charge may be extracted from Mr. O'Connell's vituperations, I might now stop, and say that I had abundantly answered the case which, in his own peculiar way, he had endeavoured to establish. But I have another object. Those political partisans, who are only careful to justify their own proceedings, and whose speeches, like those of the professional advocate, are altogether one-sided, will scarcely understand the feeling which led the Wesleyans to say, when first they read these attacks on the character of a man whose memory they so much venerated,—not,—“How shall we defend him?”—but,—“Are the charges themselves founded in truth?” The facts of the case had, therefore, first to be examined: and had we found, that Mr. Wesley, in this particular instance, had acted wrong, however much the necessity might have been regretted, yet we must have submitted to it. We are Englishmen, we are Protestants, we are Christians; and, as such, we owe an unswerving allegiance to truth. Even with Mr. O'Connell for plaintiff, and Mr. Wesley for defendant, we tell him that we are not counsel in the case, but jurors and judges, whose verdict and sentence must be according to fact and law. Mr. Wesley stands high in the esteem and affection of the societies usually called by his name; but I, who know them well, know that I should only draw on myself their indignation, by any attempt to justify his character at the expense of truth. And here it is that Mr. O'Connell and the Wesleyans stand so far apart. He understands very well the feelings of the mere professional advocate, whose one object is, to do the best he can for his client, and who does not think it needful to do any thing for his opponent: we come forward, deeply feeling, and unhesitatingly and unevasively acknow-

ledging, the supremacy of truth. We cannot take bribes from whoever offers a fee. We cannot at one time vituperate men as "base and bloody," and, at another, fawn upon them, accept their favour, and do their work. We have no principles in common with Mr. O'Connell; I therefore leave him to his own work, and confine myself to the matters alleged against Mr. Wesley. What he did, and the circumstances in which he acted, in reference to these allegations, shall be, to the best of my knowledge and belief, fairly stated. They who honour my pages with a perusal, may then form their own conclusions. If Mr. Wesley be proved to have acted wrong, let the blot be fixed on his hitherto-unspotted character: but if the allegations are found to be false, first, let judgment be given in his favour; and then let it be inquired what opinion we are justified in forming respecting similar charges against others, proceeding from the same common source. The grand artifice of Rome is to blacken the character of those, whom, in her liberality, and candour, and charity, she styles "the pretended Reformed." John Wicliffe, John Huss, Jerome of Prague, Luther, Cranmer, according to her statements, were all bad men. The attack on Mr. Wesley affords me the opportunity of trying whether these other attacks are above suspicion.

IV.

THAT the reader may thoroughly understand the entire case, I will now examine it somewhat farther than Mr. O'Connell has chosen to do. His charge is, that Mr. Wesley was one of the principal founders or managers of the Protestant Association:—Of this, he has not attempted to give even the shadow of a proof:—Then, that Mr. Wesley, both by the pulpit and the press, was one of its principal instigators. This, like the former, is utterly untrue. The resolution of thanks, voted in February, 1780, to Mr. Wesley for his services, by itself, proves nothing. The services themselves required to be examined. Was Mr. O'Connell afraid to quote Mr. England's assertions, in his "Life of Father O'Leary?" In 1822, when that work was published, the biographer felt no difficulty in asserting what, *if it were but true*—and the reader shall judge if it be—would have materially served Mr. O'Connell's purpose, namely, that Mr. Wesley, in January, 1780, published

"A Defence of the Protestant Association." Mr. England, likewise, distinctly asserts, that "*the object*" of this Association was, "by *acts of violence*, to terrify the Legislature from extending any relief to the Catholics of England." As Mr. Wesley's publications are termed by Mr. England, "inflammatory productions," it is possible that Mr. O'Connell took the hint thus given him, and ventured to enlarge it to "he roused the Protestant mob to burn the houses of the Catholics." But in doing this, there is something eminently characteristic of the man. Mr. England only speaks of the press: Mr. O'Connell could not write after his teacher, without an addition of his own. He says, "both from the pulpit and the press." The assertion about "the pulpit," is—I use a trisyllabic word, instead of Mr. O'Connell's hinted monosyllable—a pure invention of his own. Still, here seems to be something like a justification of Mr. O'Connell. Mr. England, in 1822, writing the Life of Mr. O'Leary, distinctly charges the Protestant Association with *intending* to terrify the Legislature by acts of violence; and Mr. Wesley, with writing and sending forth to the world, in January, 1780, two "inflammatory publications" with these titles, "A Letter concerning the Principles of Roman Catholics," and "A Defence of the Protestant Association." This, certainly, looks more like connecting Mr. Wesley with the Protestant Association, than Mr. O'Connell's "dates and circumstances"—meaning *one* circumstance with its date—namely, that in February, 1780, the Association voted him their thanks for his services.

The Wesleyans are obliged to Mr. O'Connell for having, by his references to the controversy between Mr. Wesley and Mr. O'Leary (which, though not in his Letters to the Manchester Methodists, are found in the published reports of his speeches elsewhere) directed their attention to the subject. Very little was known concerning it. Perhaps no portion of Mr. Wesley's public life was less understood; and, as it seemed to be of no particular importance, it does not appear that any exact inquiry into its circumstances was ever instituted. The Letters which he wrote to Mr. O'Leary are published among his other works; and though he refers to the ascription to him of a Tract which he never saw before, the matter was never deemed serious enough to call for investigation. Nor, when Mr. England's volume was published, seventeen years ago, did the charges against Mr. Wesley attract the attention of the Wesleyans. There are many works which circulate only

among readers of a particular persuasion. Mr. England, for instance, does not appear to have read that volume of Mr Wesley's Works, which contains his share of the controversy with Father O'Leary : and, on the other hand, the Wesleyans have not read his *Life of the Friar*. There is, however, this difference : In writing his volume, Mr. Wesley came in his way ; and assuming what was only a clumsy forgery to be a genuine work, the biographer then proceeded to draw on his own imagination in his elaborate description of Mr. Wesley's character, of his principles, intentions, and objects. For evidence, I hope, he did not even seek ; but finding among Mr. O'Leary's Tracts a "Defence of the Protestant Association," *intended to be understood as ascribed to Mr. Wesley*, and, likewise, some apparently jocose insinuations, designed by the dextrous controversialist to divert the reader's attention from the real points in dispute ; on these hints he spake. Whether I have rightly described his method, the reader shall shortly be enabled to judge. The Wesleyans, on the other hand, finding certain charges brought against Mr. Wesley, thought it necessary to go through the whole case, on both sides, for the purpose of ascertaining what the facts of it really were. Not only Mr. Wesley's Letters to Father O'Leary, but Father O'Leary's Tracts in reply, had to be examined. And thus was their attention very naturally directed to Mr. England's volume. But for this, his charges might have gone to posterity uncontradicted ; and have been quoted, a century or two hence, as being almost contemporary evidence,—being penned little more than thirty years after Mr. Wesley's death,—and proving that he was a designing fanatic, capable of writing "inflammatory productions," and of attempting, had he possessed the power, to exterminate Popery by physical force. Charges such as these would have been examined before, had we been aware of their existence. They who honour the memory of Mr. Wesley, are thankful that Mr. O'Connell has brought them into public notice.

Mr. England's statements shall, in the first place, be distinctly placed before the reader : some of them, for the sake of fixing his attention, will be given in *italics*. The principal topics which they include, (so far, at least, as they bear on the present inquiry,) shall then be examined separately.

"His next appearance before the public as a writer, was as the antagonist of the celebrated John Wesley. To a spirit of *deep and enthusiastic fanaticism*, Wesley joined a *profound*

calculating policy, which enlightened his progress as a religionist, though it, at times, *led him into the foul and miry paths of worldly stratagem and cunning*. If he was not imbued in a higher degree with *intolerance* than the religious sect who claim him as their founder,* he was, at least, more *unhesitating* in its avowal; and, strange as it would appear, (were not the same moral contradiction exemplified in almost every other reformer,) he who claimed for himself the right of conscientious opposition to the dictates of the established Church of the country, was *the most illiberal denier of the same rights* to the numerous and oppressed body of his Catholic countrymen. His conduct, in this instance, was a striking commentary on the words of Tacitus, *Eò immitior quia toleraverat*.

“There was a *policy* of no ordinary kind in Wesley’s enmity to the Catholics. He was himself a more insidious enemy to the established Church than any of his contemporaries. *His early efforts were DIRECTED to its overthrow*; and the corrosive influence of his doctrines and system on the fabric of English Protestantism, are at this day felt and exclaimed against by the best friends to the Establishment. It is no wonder, therefore, *that he should SEEK TO DIVERT* the too intense and scrutinizing gaze of the guardians of orthodoxy, from his pursuits and designs. An opportunity of doing so presented itself; and, satisfied with the *MOTIVE*, he availed himself of it, *BECKLESS OF CONSEQUENCES*.

“The Protestant Association, whose object was, by acts of violence, to terrify the Legislature from extending any relief to the Catholics of England, was a measure of popular and fanatical institution. However imposing it was in point of physical strength, it stood much in need of literary defence against able and powerful antagonists: and Wesley conciliated the favour, and ensured the applause, of the multitude by ‘A Letter concerning the Principles of Roman Catholics;’ AND ‘A DEFENCE OF THE PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION,’ *which he printed in January, 1780*. The aim of these publications was to prove, ‘that no Government, not Catholic, ought to tolerate men of the Roman Catholic persuasion;’ and ‘to excite the Protestants to join hand in hand, and unite as one man in their opposition to Popery; a cause in which their

* Mr. England might be Mr. O’Connell’s teacher. Here is the same sort of reference to the fellowship of bad qualities between Mr. Wesley and the Methodists.

present and future welfare was so nearly concerned.' It would appear, from THE TENOR of Wesley's attacks on Catholicism, that he wanted but the torch, the sword, and the followers of John Knox, to attempt 'the extermination of Popery' BY PHYSICAL FORCE. The spirit which actuated both these reformers was the same; their views of Catholicity similar; and the temper of the times, and *not of the individuals*, was the discrepancy which saved a *peaceful, loyal*, and INOFFENSIVE people from DESTRUCTION.

"O'Leary, who was in Dublin when *these inflammatory productions* issued from the press, immediately replied to them in what he termed, 'Remarks on the Reverend John Wesley's Letter on the civil Principles of Roman Catholics, and his Defence of the Protestant Association.'* With the CANDOUR OF A LOVER OF TRUTH, he prefixed the *Letter and Defence* to his own Remarks, and thus put under the public eye, at the same time, the charge, and its refutation." (Life of the Reverend Arthur O'Leary, &c. By the Rev. Thomas R. England. pp. 81—84.)

Mr. England may call this writing history, or biography, or whatever he pleases. Its real name is fiction,—pure, unalloyed fiction. He might just as well have said, professing to describe Mr. Wesley's person, that he was a stout man, above six feet in height; or, his habits, that he was remarkable for slovenliness and uncertainty. Mr. England's description is not only not the truth, but it does not even resemble the truth. It has not even the merit of caricature likeness. Mr. England, with the two papers before him, supplied by Mr. O'Leary, has formed his own conception of Mr. Wesley's character, without seeking any other evidence. He has described him as he alone could understand him. The eminent simplicity and spirituality of Mr. Wesley would be as colours to the man born blind. The features of the crafty, fanatical Jesuit, Mr. England would have no difficulty in delineating; but he would, if the preceding extract be a fair specimen of his manner of forming judgments, be completely at a loss, if required to present portraiture of the saintly Fenelon, or Pascal, or Quesnel, or Nicole; men of undoubted spirituality, whose characters we

* Let the reader look well at this title of Mr. O'Leary's book, as given here by Mr. England. A second edition was published, not long after, with an *altered* title, which will soon be quoted. It must be carefully compared with the one given above. The reader will then know what Jesuitry means, if he never knew it before.

admire, however much we regret what we believe to be their errors. Had Mr. England at all studied Mr. Wesley, I would fain hope he could not so completely, so utterly, have misunderstood him. But, finding these two "inflammatory productions" in Mr. O'Leary's book, and finding too, in the midst of the pretended good humour of the Friar, the bitterest insinuations; finding him, too, charged on Mr. O'Leary's page with what, as Mr. O'Leary puts the case, is a palpable falsehood; and seeing in Mr. Wesley both a Protestant Heresiarch, and an earnest opposer of Popery; Mr. England has plainly sat down to ask his own heart, "What sort of a man must this John Wesley have been? What must have been his motives, what his objects?" The result was the composition of the paragraph which I have laid before the reader: a paragraph which describes John Wesley AS UNDERSTOOD by Mr. England! With Mr. England's views of religious truth, of course he could not approve of Mr. Wesley's proceedings; but a candid study of them would have led to a very different account. Mr. England, it will be seen, has referred to the motives of Mr. Wesley, not to his conduct merely. Let the reader put together the statements which Mr. England has made. Mr. Wesley was influenced by a spirit of DEEP AND ENTHUSIASTIC FANATICISM, to which he added a PROFOUND AND CALCULATING POLICY, which sometimes led him into THE FOUL AND MIRY PATHS OF WORLDLY STRATAGEM AND CUNNING. And how does he make this out? Thus: first, "He was a more insidious adversary to the established Church than any of his contemporaries. *His early efforts were directed to its overthrow.*" If Mr. England *knew* any thing of Mr. Wesley; if his conception of his character be not, from first to last, sheer invention, he must have known that not a word—no, not one word—of all this is true. But even this is nothing to what follows. "Directing" (they are Mr. England's own words) "directing his early efforts to the overthrow of the established Church;" the subtle hypocrite (for, as Mr. England describes him, such he was) "seeks to divert the too eager and scrutinizing gaze of the guardians of orthodoxy from his pursuits and designs." An opportunity occurs; and, "satisfied with the motive," namely, to conceal his designs of overthrowing the Church, "he availed himself of it, *reckless of consequences.*" That is, Mr. Wesley wrote the tracts on which Mr. O'Leary animadverted, (supposing that he *did* write them,) to divert attention from his plans for the destruc-

tion of the national Church ! If Mr. O'Connell believed this account of Mr. England's, he may really be pardoned for his attacks. A man capable of doing what is here most unequivocally stated that Mr. Wesley did, was quite capable of instigating the Protestant Association to the riots of 1780. Had Mr. England studied the man whom he has thus maligned, regard to his own character as an author would have prevented the composition of the paragraph in question. That Mr. Wesley was a *mistaken* opponent of the Romanists, a Roman Catholic Priest must, of course, fully believe ; but he is here described as a *dishonest* one. This is any thing but honourable opponency. But this is not all. Mr. England ventures to say, that " it would appear, FROM THE TENOR OF WESLEY'S ATTACKS ON CATHOLICISM, that he wanted but the torch, the sword, and the followers of John Knox, to attempt the extermination of Popery by PHYSICAL FORCE." " From the tenor of Wesley's attacks ! " Mr. England had before him, when he wrote this, what he considered as Mr. Wesley's attacks. I will give him the full benefit of this. Let him, then, simply print them, and let the public judge between us. He says, " From the tenor of Mr. Wesley's attacks, it would appear that he only wanted power, to lead him to attempt the extermination of Popery by physical force."—I say, on the contrary, that nothing of the sort presents itself. " With persecution," says Mr. Wesley, " I have nothing to do. I persecute no man for his religious opinions. Let there be ' as boundless a freedom in religion as any man can conceive.' " Mr. England might just as well have said, that Mr. Locke only wanted the power to attempt the extermination of Popery by physical force, as that this was the case with Mr. Wesley. If ever John Wesley appeared to be the disciple of John Locke, it was when he wrote the remarks on Popery, on which Mr. England animadvert. We are told by Romanist writers, that Gregory III., on hearing of the Bartholomew massacre,—as compared with which the death of the Duc D'Enghien was neither crime nor blunder,—sent a Legate à latere to the wretched monarch of France, " admonishing him to continue what he had so vigorously commenced, and not to lose the cure so successfully begun by rough remedies, through mixing milder ones with them." *

* " *Flavium Cardinalem Ursinum Legatum à Latere in Galliam destinat, qui Carolum Regem admoneat ut cæptis insistat fortiter, neque curam asperis remediis inchoatam prosperè, perdat leniora miscendo.*"—*Numismata Pontif. Rom.*, &c. *Phil. Bonanni, Societatis Jesu, Romæ, &c., MDCXCIX., cum Facultate superiorum.*

And another Romanist writer, speaking of the same Pope, and enumerating his virtues, says, "He was a mirror of virtue, and the image of the great St. Gregory: he often solicited the Princes of Christendom to make war on the Turk: he furnished money plentifully to Maximilian II., Emperor; to Henry III., King of France; and to Philip II., to destroy heresies from their land by force of arms, and to reduce heretics to their duty."* Had Mr. Wesley written in this style, indeed, Mr. England might have said, that "from the tenor of his attacks on Catholicism," it was plain that he only wanted the power, to attempt the extermination of Popery by physical force; but when a Pope writes thus, his words must bear a very different meaning. However, the whole matter may be easily settled, and all these painful references to past times avoided. Mr. England, and Mr. O'Connell, and all their friends, I suppose, are agreed that the secular power ought not to deprive a man of his rights on account of his religion. Well, then, let the measure of liberty granted to Protestants in Italy, Spain, and Austria, be the measure of the liberty granted to the Romanists of Great Britain. Let Protestantism have but fair play, and Protestants are willing to abide the issue. But let the exiles of Zillerthal tell their tale on this subject. Let the recent refusal of Spain to allow any attempts on the part of Protestantism to diffuse its own principles, explain the meaning of SEMPER EADEM. Nay; just now, when Popery is demanding so much in England, the British Government informs the parties concerned, as the result of a correspondence on the subject, that British Protestant residents at the Havannah cannot be permitted to have a Protestant Chaplain. Popery, wherever she possesses power,—full, dominant power,—refuses to Protestants what they believe to be an essential portion of liberty, and what they call liberty of conscience. And yet Protestants are to be blamed when they resolve to make sure of the liberty they possess, by refusing to put it into the power of Papists to deprive them of it. Let the Papacy remove those restrictions which hinder Protestants from doing all in

* "Il étoit un miroir de vertu, le prodige de son siècle, et l'image du grand saint Grégoire: il a souvent sollicité les Princes Chrétiens à faire la guerre au Turc: il a fourni quantité d'argent à Maximilian II., Empereur; à Henry III., Roy de France; et à Philippe II.; pour détruire les heresies de leur terre à force d'armes, et reduire les hérétiques en leur devoir."—*L'Esprit Chronologique de l'Histoire sacrée et profane*, &c. A Paris, MDCLXXIII. Avec permission et approbation.

the Papal territories, that Romanists may do in England. Let the full power of the Papacy be sincerely employed in procuring similar liberty in Spain, Portugal, Austria. Let it be as lawful for a Protestant Minister to deliver lectures in Rome, on the doctrines of Protestantism, as for Dr. Wiseman to deliver lectures in London, on the doctrines of Romanism. Let it be as lawful to circulate books on Protestantism in Roman Catholic countries, as it is to circulate books on Romanism in Protestant countries. Give the parties a fair field. We hear much now about the power of truth ;—and the Romanists say, they have indubitable truth on their side ;—let the trial be made. Give Protestantism in Roman Catholic countries all that Roman Catholics ask in Great Britain ; and I, for one, will immediately say,—“ Let them have what they ask.” But do they think us blind, or besotted, that we should not understand the meaning of all this outcry about candour, and charity, and liberty of conscience, and the like ? Translated into language which shall express what they who use it really mean, it is neither more nor less than this,—“ The cases are utterly unlike. We, Catholics, hold the only true religion ; you, the pretended Reformed, hold what is indisputably false. We have a right, therefore, to demand full liberty for ourselves ; but we have neither right nor power to allow it to you.” I believe the opinion is gaining ground,—slowly, perhaps,—but, for that reason, the more powerfully,—that the experiment of concession to Romanism, having been tried, has failed, signally failed ;—and that, much to be deprecated as is all legislative retrogradation, and, to the latest moment possible, to be avoided, yet that, unless the Papacy will allow liberty to Protestantism, Papists must themselves submit to restrictions which, in reference to Protestants, the authorities of their religion pronounce to be good.

Mr. England, of course, had to mention the Protestant Association. I am willing to hope that he judges of it entirely by the representations which Mr. O’Leary furnishes, in connexion with the disastrous results of the Resolution which they adopted, at the instance of Lord George Gordon, to assemble *en masse*, for the purpose of presenting their petition to Parliament. Had he confined himself to the folly of this resolution, and said, that, as the consequences might have been anticipated, a large share of the criminality devolved upon those who called the multitude together ; I defend them no more than I defend the infuriate, incendiary mob, which for several days ranged

over the city, almost at will. The Resolution of the Committee of the Protestant Association, that at least forty thousand persons should assemble to accompany Lord George Gordon to the House of Commons, as the bearer of the Protestant Petition, was undoubtedly the *OCCASION* of the riots that ensued. But let justice be done. Mr. England says, that their *OBJECT* was, by acts of violence, to terrify the Legislature from extending any relief to the Catholics of England. What evidence Mr. England possesses of the *OBJECT* of the Association, besides what has hitherto been given to the public, I know not. If he has that which will justify the use of the word *object*, as distinct from *occasion*, as both words are ordinarily used, let him, in justification of his character, publish it. He will not easily find any religious Protestant who would hesitate to join him in the strongest condemnation he himself might choose to draw up. But after wading through all that I can find in relation to these transactions, both in the usual periodicals of the day, and in the numerous tracts which were published immediately upon the suppression of the riots, I can call Mr. England's assertion,—taking the words in their ordinary sense, and as distinct from *occasion*,—by no other name than that of pure invention. It is writing romance, not history.

In November, 1779, more than half a year before the riots, the Protestant Association published an "Appeal to the People of Great Britain." When Mr. O'Connell published his Letters, charging Mr. Wesley with having roused the Protestant mob to burn the houses of Catholics, I had not seen a copy of this production. I only knew that Mr. Wesley had said, in a letter to "The Printer of the Public Advertiser," dated January 21, 1780, "Some time ago a pamphlet was sent me, entitled, 'An Appeal from the Protestant Association, to the People of Great Britain.' A day or two since, a kind of answer to this was put into my hand, which pronounces its style contemptible, its reasoning futile, and its object malicious. *On the contrary, I think the style of it is clear, easy, and natural; the reasoning, in general, strong and conclusive; the object or design, kind and benevolent.* And in pursuance of the same kind and benevolent design, namely, to preserve our happy Constitution, I shall endeavour to confirm the substance of that Tract, by a few plain arguments."

The reader will at once perceive, that this approval is of a very general character, and that it refers not at all to the Association itself, but exclusively to the Appeal which it

had published. Whether it proves Mr. Wesley to have instigated the riots which occurred half a year subsequently, is a question which he will find no difficulty in deciding. Nevertheless, that no room may be left for any honest imputation on the character of Mr. Wesley, inasmuch as he gave his public approval to the general principles of the Appeal of the Association, some notices of the period in which the Association itself existed, shall now be given.

Some two or three years previously, a Bill had been introduced into Parliament by Sir George Saville, for the repeal of certain penal statutes pressing heavily on the Roman Catholics of Ireland. On this question, the country appears to have been greatly divided. All parties were agreed, that religious persecution was wrong; but, in the application of the principle to the case of the Roman Catholics, while many thought with Sir George Saville and Edmund Burke, others took this ground—That Romanists, in addition to what were properly religious opinions, held certain other opinions, not properly religious, and which, in case of their regaining their former ascendancy, would operate to the destruction of what all Protestants regard as an essential branch of genuine freedom, namely, liberty of conscience. Such persons, therefore, agreed, that, for the safety of Protestant freedom, the same toleration could not be granted to Roman Catholics, that not only might be, but ought to be, granted to Protestant religionists. This, three quarters of a century earlier, had been the opinion of such men as Andrew Marvel, John Locke, and the Whigs of the 1688 school: and many of those who, at the time of the passing of Sir George Saville's Act, thought that concession might safely be made to Romanists, both held and expressed the most decided opinions as to the principles of Roman Catholics, and the absolute necessity of maintaining a sufficient barrier against all Roman Catholic encroachments.

To me, this appears a very important aspect of the case. From the accounts given by Mr. O'Connell, Mr. England, and Father O'Leary, it might be inferred that Mr. Wesley, and the members of the Protestant Association, in stating their fears as to the progress and ascendancy of Popery, were setting themselves in opposition to the more liberal opinions of the age. On the contrary, even among those liberal Protestants by whom Sir George Saville's measure was approved, the most decided opposition to Popery itself existed, and the necessity of guarding against its encroachment was fully acknowledged.

To make this plain, I need only refer to the Numbers of the Monthly Review, as then published. It was conducted on what would be considered the most liberal principles. Dr. Priestley, for instance, was evidently one of the favourites of the Reviewers. To what would be termed "High-Church intolerance" they were systematically opposed; and to the cause of religious liberty they gave an advocacy, which every one that reads the volumes of the work must feel to have been both powerful and effective. The pages of the Monthly Review, therefore, may be taken as exhibiting the opinions even of *liberal* Protestants on the subject of Popery; and the rather so, as they were staunch friends of Sir George Saville's Bill, and avowed opponents to the Protestant Association, as seeking to procure its modification or repeal. What, then, were the opinions of these liberal Reviewers? Did the class which they represented seek the removal of what they regarded as unjust restrictions, by declaring either that their opinions on the subject of Popery were no longer the same, as those formerly held by the great body of English Dissenters, or that, in their belief, Popery had undergone some important changes for the better? Did they even seek to gain their object by concealing their opinion,—by being silent on the question? Let the four volumes for 1779 and 1780 be examined, and no difficulty will be found in answering these questions. The liberal class of Protestant religionists, if these volumes be at all a fair specimen, were accustomed to express themselves quite as strongly as either Mr. Wesley, or the Protestant Association. A few extracts will abundantly prove what I have now said. And I would particularly request the reader's attention to the first extract. It seems that, almost as soon as Sir George Saville's Bill was passed, the Rev. Caleb Evans, a well known Dissenting Minister, and exceedingly zealous for civil and religious liberty, felt it to be his duty, not to preach forgetfulness of the past;—not to say that the faults of Popery were only the faults of the times, and that with the improvements of the age Popery was itself improved;—nothing of the kind: Mr. Evans felt on the subject of Popery, as Robert Hall, his pupil, and an occupier of the same pulpit, felt half a century later.

"The Remembrance of former Days. Preached at Broadmead, Bristol, November 5th, 1778. By Caleb Evans, M.A. Published at the Request of those who heard it.—A good, honest, zealous, Dissenting declamation, against despotism, and against Popery, the friend of despotism. Mr. Evans does not

absolutely protest against the indulgence lately extended to the Roman Catholics of this country ; but he strongly recommends it to us still to keep a watchful eye upon them ; and, among other testimonies, he quotes some striking passages from the celebrated Ganganelli's Letters, to evince that the old intolerant spirit of the Church of Rome is not yet rooted out of her."—*Monthly Review*, Jan., 1779, p. 80.

"*An Essay on the Toleration of Papists.*—The design of this essay is to show, that religious and civil freedom have nothing to fear from the indulgence which the Government has lately shown its Roman Catholic subjects. The author says, he never wishes to see a repetition of the slavish superstitions and encroachments of Rome ; but the situation of the world, he thinks, is not at present exposed to them. That general darkness which concealed their hateful designs is dispelled, and the stupendous edifice is crumbling fast away, and totters on the brink of destruction."—*Idem*, March, 1779, p. 243.

"*Christianity an easy and liberal System ; that of Popery, absurd and burdensome.* Preached at Salter's-hall, Nov. 5th, 1778. By Hugh Worthington, Jun.—A seasonable and sensible discourse, in which the errors of Popery are properly represented. It seems, that the present times render it highly expedient to guard people, frequently and seriously, against the delusions of the Church of Rome, while we maintain a charitable and Christian spirit towards its particular members."—*Idem*, March, 1779, p. 244.

"*The old-fashioned Farmer's Reasons for leaving the Church of England, &c.*—This is one of the first-fruits of allowing the Catholics a little more elbow-room. May the God of mercy preserve us in our errors against such modes of conviction !"—*Idem*, April, 1779, p. 325.

"*A Letter to Dr. Fordyce, in Answer to his Sermon on the delusive and persecuting Spirit of Popery.*—A feeble attempt to wash the blackamoor white."—*Idem*, April, 1779, p. 329.

"*Thoughts on the present State of the Roman Catholics, &c.*—A sensible advocate for the English Catholics ; but when such apologists plead the good dispositions of their clients, which, at best, is but a contingency, it is only adopting the same mode of reasoning to plead the liberal disposition of the age, as unwilling to oppress the Catholics," &c.—*Idem*, May, 1779, p. 400.

"*A seasonable Caution against the Abominations of the*

Church of Rome. By C. De Coetlogon.—Candour and moderation toward persons of every religious denomination we must wish to be encouraged; but the history of the whole Christian world so clearly proves the ill-tendency of Popish principles and usurpations on the rights and consciences of men, that we cannot be too much guarded against them. This author gives, on the whole, a proper view of his subject. He intends his book for the common people, believing that the youth of this nation, especially of the poorer sort, are in danger of being educated in the horrid principles of the Church of Rome; ‘thousands,’ he says, ‘having been invited, and many received, into Popish seminaries, in several parts of Great Britain.’ We do not entirely approve of one or two of his terms, such as ‘diabolical council,’ ‘hypocritical zeal;’ because there are, no doubt, sincere and worthy persons in this party of Christians, as well as in others. We join, however, with him in his concluding paragraph: ‘The state of the nation is alarming; the state of religion is much more so; therefore, as men, as citizens, as Christians, BEWARE!’” *Idem*, May, 1779. p. 403.

“*A complete History of all the Religious Houses in the Counties of Devon and Cornwall, &c.* By the Rev. W. Jones.—If the Constitution should be changed, and Popery should so far gain on the indulgence which has lately been shown to it, through the singular lenity of our wise and gracious rulers, as to recover its former establishments,—(and stranger revolutions have been effected by folly in league with wickedness,)—it will be in vain for the possessors of the lands of the Church, to urge their claims from time or prerogative. Nothing, in the opinion of the Romish Church, can sanctify sacrilege! Assassinations, conspiracies, violations of treaties, are, in comparison with Church-robbery, venial crimes. Touch her interest in this tender point, and she would esteem even forgiveness a sin. She will cry aloud and spare not. The enormous rent-roll, the records of her former possessions in England, will be drawn from the archives of the College of Doway; and ‘the mother of harlots,’ even the ‘scarlet whore, who rideth upon the beast with seven heads and ten horns,’ will, by the laws of her own Chancery, enter on the premises, nor will she quit them ‘till she is paid the uttermost farthing.’” *Idem*, October, 1779. p. 288.

“*An Apology for Catholic Faith, &c.*—Of all religious apologists, the Catholics are, perhaps, the most evasive, the

most addicted to quibbles, and, in general, the most difficult to fix to a direct discussion of the actual points in contest." *Idem*, October, 1779. p. 317.

"*The Protestant Alarm, &c.*—As the principles of humanity and of Christianity unite to render us firm friends to religious toleration, and liberty of conscience, we cannot but wish that Roman Catholics, as well as others, might share the benefit. At the same time, it may be asked, whether the history of our own and other countries, together with the certain tenets of Popery, do not prove that concessions ought to be made in a very cautious and guarded manner." *Idem*, Nov. 1780. p. 397.

"*The Spirit of Popery displayed, &c.*—That the Church of Rome is a very convenient establishment to shelter the frailty of mortals, who have money ready to entitle themselves to her favours; and that she is not disposed to be unreasonably severe with those who apply properly for indulgence, are circumstances which have long been sufficiently known." *Idem*, Nov. 1780. p. 398.

"*Sermon preached in the Cathedral at York, July 30th, 1780. By Nicholas Torre.*—The Preacher assures us that the 'Papal authority is now so enfeebled, that the extension of its influence is no longer to be dreaded.' Others are of opinion, that the principles of Popery have always the same tendency to disquiet and oppress mankind; and, therefore, that while every provision is to be made for the safety and comfort of individuals among the Papists, it is wise and reasonable to do it under some restrictions. However this be, we never yet could admit the thought, that any zeal for religion really occasioned the horrid devastations to which this discourse alludes." *Idem*, Nov. 1780. p. 478.

Such, then, were the opinions concerning Popery held by those whom we may term "the Liberals" of the day. Mr. Wesley, and the Protestant Association, only echo the sentiments of the class represented by the Monthly Reviewers. In fact, it was the Old-English feeling, the Revolution feeling of the inhabitants of the country generally. If bigotry it were, the nation was bigoted; and the sentiments put forth by Mr. Wesley were national sentiments.

The Monthly Reviewers noticed, soon after its appearance, the "Appeal of the Protestant Association." With its object,—namely, that of procuring a repeal or modification of Sir George Saville's Bill,—they do not at all coincide. They approve of "the late Act." But, though they state what the

contents of the pamphlet are, there is no allusion whatever to an expressed intention to stir up the people to acts of violence.

The Appeal itself thus opens: "Alarmed at the indulgence granted to Papists, by an Act lately past in their favour, and well persuaded that the principles of Popery deserve no such encouragement from any Protestant State; we feel for ourselves, we tremble for posterity: and, having maturely deliberated on the consequences that most probably will result from this indulgence, we think it a duty we owe to religion and our country, to associate; and by EVERY LAWFUL METHOD to procure a remedy for the evils apprehended from its operation, and to preserve the inestimable privileges which, as Christians, and members of society, we enjoy.

"This Association is not formed to promote the views of party, or to embarrass the measures of Government at this important crisis. It consists of Protestants, who will yield to none of their fellow-subjects, in loyalty to His Majesty's person, or in zealous attachment to our happy constitution.

"If the doctrines held by Papists *were confined to matters of opinion in religion*,—and did not include POLITICAL TENETS OF THE MOST DANGEROUS TENDENCY, they might expect the same connivance which has been shown to other erroneous sects: they might bow down to their images, swallow the absurd doctrine of transubstantiation, and amuse themselves with dreams of purgatory, without interruption; their ignorance and superstition would rather excite compassion, than expose them to the consequences of any penal statutes.

"But when Papists thunder excommunication against all who differ from them in opinion, and their religious profession itself breathes the very spirit of persecution and cruelty against those whom they anathematize as heretics; who, if princes, are to be deposed and murdered; if subjects, to be massacred: when they avow such principles as these, what security can be given to any State for their peaceable behaviour? and what claim can they have to toleration under any Protestant Government?

"It is not our desire to persecute; but, as Protestants, we are concerned to secure ourselves and posterity from Popish persecution. When we call to mind the Protestant blood that has been shed by Papists, both at home and in foreign countries, we cannot but be excited to use EVERY LEGAL EXPEDIENT, to prevent the return of such a national calamity.

“Should the Papists, in any future period, be possessed of power, we have reason to apprehend that the same principles would be productive of the same effects. These principles they have never publicly disavowed; and, as Papists, cannot with any consistency disown; therefore, as they strike at our liberties and lives, to tolerate persons professing them, is to lay the axe at the root of our dearest privileges and most sacred rights.

“Impressed with these considerations, we would now call the attention of our fellow-subjects to the following observations on ‘the late Act of Parliament:’ and if the matter contained in them be true, if our wisest and best laws against Popery be virtually repealed, and our constitution actually endangered; what measures should we adopt, with what spirit and unanimity should we act, to preserve our civil and religious liberties from the encroachments of Popery, and from its inseparable concomitant,—arbitrary power!”

The body of the Appeal is chiefly occupied by references to various Acts of Parliament relating to Romanists, and arguments upon them; together with a statement of the consequences likely to ensue from Sir George Saville’s Act. The reader will, perhaps, wish to have a specimen of these “consequences,” as prognosticated in 1779, just fifty years before the passing of the “Relief Bill,” in 1829:—

“Being enabled to purchase, and capacitated to inherit, they will acquire an increase of power, as their landed property increases; and, by their landed property, will certainly, in a future period, *influence our elections in Parliament.*

“By an influence in Parliamentary elections, a future Parliament may be found endued with such a liberal spirit of toleration, as to remove the Test Act; to qualify them for offices of Magistracy, and give them an opportunity of sitting in both Houses of Parliament; or Papists (as they can have dispensations for oaths) may think it a duty they owe to the Church of Rome, and by Jesuitical sophistry be taught, that it is no sin to put on the profession of Protestantism for a season, to obtain seats in Parliament, that they may serve the interests of Popery.

“Should such a period arrive,—and unless wise and timely measures are taken to prevent it, most assuredly it will,—where then will be the safety of the Protestant succession in the illustrious House of Hanover? and what security will our posterity have for the preservation of their civil and religious liberties?

"Nor are these fatal events improbable; perhaps not very remote. If Papists have power, it must be used to spread and exalt Popery throughout the land." (Appeal, &c., p. 52.)

It is added,—

"Are these the consequences of this Act? and shall we be indifferent? Have we no regard for our welfare, and for the dearest interests of our posterity? Shall we perjure and ruin ourselves without making one generous effort? Heaven forbid! Let us be roused to a consideration of our state: let us apply to Government to obtain redress. We have reason to hope they would attend to our application, and remedy the evils apprehended from that improvident Act. But if they refuse, we shall have nothing to reproach ourselves with: we shall have discharged our duty, and, armed with conscious integrity, be prepared for every event." (*Idem*, p. 55.) Again,—

"Our constitution hath marked out the mode of obtaining redress; and declares that it is the right of the subject to petition. Let petitions be circulated throughout the kingdom: let the Clergy of the Establishment, and Protestant Ministers of every denomination, and all who are zealous for the welfare and safety of the Protestant religion, cordially unite, and strenuously exert themselves on this important occasion.

"Let petitions against the Popish Bill be sent to Parliament, with numerous signatures from every county, city, and corporation; and from other respectable bodies of people. Let our representatives be instructed by their constituents to support these petitions in the House; and, as the eve of a general election is approaching, we have reason to hope that these instructions will be attended to. Should they be neglected, we soon shall have an opportunity in our hands of electing members more attentive to the voice of the people, and the preservation of the Protestant interest." (*Idem*, p. 60.)

Such, then, was the Appeal of the Protestant Association, published in November, 1779. And of this, Mr. Wesley, referring to a Reply to it which he had seen, gave, on the other hand, a general approval of its style, reasoning, and object, expressed in about three lines, in a letter published in the following January.

The subject of the Association deserves a little more notice. On Monday, the 29th of May, 1780, a meeting of the Association was held at Coachmakers'-Hall, in pursuance of public advertisement, to consider the best mode of presenting the petition which had been agreed upon, to the House of Com-

mons. It was then resolved, that the whole body of the Association should meet in St. George's Fields on the following Friday, June 2d, to accompany Lord George Gordon, their President, as far as the House of Commons, where he was to present the Protestant petition. His Lordship said, that, unless at least twenty thousand were present, he would not take charge of the petition. All this was done publicly. The meeting was called by public advertisement. The Government was therefore aware of the whole matter. Yet it was not till the assembled multitude began to be unruly that any apprehensions were entertained. On the 3d of June, the day after the meeting, Lord Stormont sent this note to the Lord Mayor: (dated, 14 m. p. two p. m.):—"My Lord,—As information which I have received, gives me reason to apprehend that tumults may arise within your Lordship's jurisdiction, I think it my duty to convey to you this information. I cannot too strongly recommend the matter to your Lordship's attention; and am confident, from your known activity, that you will not omit any legal exertion of the civil power which may contribute, upon this occasion, to preserve the public peace." Now, if the *intention* of the Association had been, by acts of violence, to terrify the Legislature, Government would have been somewhat better prepared than this. But the fact, that the riots had actually broken out before any serious apprehensions were excited, of itself speaks volumes.

On the trial of Lord George Gordon, (February 5th, 1781,) no evidence whatever implicated the Association at that period of its existence when Mr. Wesley published the letter already mentioned. Some witnesses, indeed, deposed, that, on the 29th of May, his Lordship used some very violent expressions; but even these were modified by others. The Attorney-General said, he believed that, up to a certain period, they only meant to petition in an orderly, constitutional manner; and that, if they adopted other intentions, it was under Lord George's influence. Lord Mansfield told the Jury, that if the object of the assembled multitude was, by force and violence, to compel the Legislature to repeal the law, it would be high treason; but, if they did not believe such to be their object, there would be an end of the whole case.

Of the fact of *rioting*, no doubt was entertained, and several unhappy men, found guilty on the clearest evidence, suffered the extreme penalty of the law; but, when a charge of having previously intended this was laid before a Jury, a verdict of

"Not Guilty," evinced what was their opinion. Had the first assembling of the multitude, on the 2d of June, been treasonable, no doubt could have existed for a moment of the guilt of Lord George. He was, beyond question, leader, instigator, and manager of the Meeting, and the procession to the House. The Judge's directions put the case on the character of the Meeting; and, with those directions before them, after a trial of *twenty-one hours*, the Jury, in about twenty-five minutes, agreed to a verdict, "Not Guilty."

One of the witnesses examined was the Rev. Erasmus Middleton, Lecturer of St. Bennet's, one of the "six" who were expelled from Oxford for "Methodism." Being asked whether, in any of his public speeches at the Association, his Lordship had made use of any disloyal expression, or said that he meant to repeal the Bill by force of arms, or by intimidation, he answered strongly in the negative. He was himself one who disapproved of the petition "being carried up by the general body." Mr. Middleton was likewise on the Committee of the Association.

Had, therefore, Mr. Wesley been a member of the Association to the very morning of the second of June, 1780, still, additional evidence would have been necessary to sustain the allegations of Mr. O'Connell, that he was an instigator of the Protestant riots of 1780, and that he roused the Protestants to burn the houses of the Catholics. Mr. England's assertion, that these riots formed part of the object of the Association, is not only without, but even against, evidence. And both Mr. O'Connell and Mr. England would do well to ask, whether, by writing thus, they are not doing all in their power to convince those Protestants who desire to act most liberally towards them, however unwilling they are to submit to the conviction, that Popery is essentially faithless, and that the statements of a Popish advocate are not to be trusted?

But, as the Protestant Association, in February, 1780, voted a Resolution of thanks to Mr. Wesley for his services, it will be necessary to inquire what he really did; and this will introduce the reader to the knowledge of the Rev. Arthur O'Leary, of whom Mr. England has written a Life; and in which, especially, he describes him as being influenced, in his controversy with Mr. Wesley, by a spirit of candour and liberality. How far the praise is deserved, the reader will judge, when he has seen in what manner Father O'Leary allowed himself to act.

In Mr Wesley's Journal, under the date of "January 18th,

1780," I find the following entry, written with evident sincerity : " Receiving more and more accounts of the increase of Popery, I believed it my duty to write a letter concerning it, which was afterwards inserted in the public papers. Many were grievously offended ; but I cannot help it : I must follow my conscience." This " Letter " was addressed to the Printer of the " Public Advertiser," and is dated, January 21st. Subsequently, it was printed along with two others, addressed to the Editors of the " Freeman's Journal," Dublin ; the first being dated at Manchester, March 23d, and the second, at Chester, March 31st, 1780. The two letters, when published with the former, (to the " Public Advertiser,") in one pamphlet, had an advertisement, " To the Reader," prefixed, dated, December 29th, 1780. The three are inserted in the Appendix. The Letter to the " Public Advertiser " presses—many will think that it presses *logically*—the points expressed in this one paragraph : " Setting then religion aside, it is plain, that, upon principles of reason, no Government ought to tolerate men who cannot give any security to that Government for their allegiance and peaceable behaviour. But this no Romanist can do, not only while he holds that ' no faith is to be kept with heretics,' but so long as he acknowledges either priestly absolution, or the spiritual power of the Pope." The Letter defends views similar to those which had been taken by the Association in their Appeal, and shows the danger to be apprehended from the encroachments of Popery, under a Protestant Government. With the *correctness* of his views, I have just now nothing to do. I am at present only concerned with that which Mr. England has impugned,—his *honesty in stating them*. Let the reader go back to Mr. England's paragraph. The charge is, that Mr. Wesley, in order to divert attention from his own endeavours to overthrow the national Church, under the influence of a calculating and extraordinary policy, (by which " he was led, at times, into THE FOUL AND MIRY PATHS OF WORLDLY STRATAGEM AND CUNNING,") availed himself of the opportunity afforded him of doing this, by an attack on the Catholics, and a seeming zeal for Protestantism. From Mr. England's paragraph, let the reader turn to Mr. Wesley's Letter in the Appendix, (marked I.,) and recollect that Mr. England's charge is, that that Letter was written by a designing hypocrite, and in furtherance of his hypocritical schemes. So Mr. England deliberately, publicly, in 1822, writes and publishes of John Wesley ! The Wesleyans are obliged to Mr. O'Connell

for having prompted inquiries which have led to this exposition of the Papistical plan of blackening the character of the opponents of Popery.

And now for Father O'Leary. When Mr. Wesley's Letter to the "Public Advertiser" appeared, Mr. O'Leary published some remarks upon it, in the "Freeman's Journal." To this, Mr. Wesley published a reply in the same paper. (See Appendix III.) And in reply to some more of Mr. O'Leary's Remarks, he sent a second Letter. (Appendix IV.) Mr. O'Leary then collected his Observations, and printed them all together. To these collected remarks, he professed to prefix Mr. Wesley's Letters. Mr. England says of this transaction,—“With the candour of a lover of truth, he prefixed the Letter and Defence to his own Remarks, and thus put under the public eye, at the same time, the charge and its refutation.” So says Mr. England. But what is the truth? Mr. Wesley's "Letters" to the "Freeman's Journal," (Appendix III. and IV.,) in which he combats Mr. O'Leary's positions, are *not* given;—but, first, Mr. Wesley's Letter to the "Public Advertiser" is given, and so far, all is fair: with this Letter, the controversy may be said to have originated. But now follows a mysterious circumstance. I will put it before the reader just as it is. He may then form his own opinions upon it.

First, then, it will be seen that the Letter to the Advertiser does not connect Mr. Wesley with the Protestant Association. He speaks favourably of the style, reasoning, and object, of the "Appeal," (understanding by the object, the preservation of the English Protestant constitution,) and that is all. Mr. O'Leary's book, however, carries the matter much further. According to Mr. England, the collection was termed,—let the reader mark this well,—“Remarks on the Reverend John Wesley's Letter on the civil Principles of Roman Catholics, *and his Defence of the Protestant Association.*” In justification of this title, there appeared in Mr. O'Leary's book, a piece entitled, “A Defence of the Protestant Association. By J. W.” (See Appendix II.) Mr. England appears to have regarded this as being, without doubt, Mr. Wesley's. He says, that Mr. Wesley “conciliated the favour, and ensured the applause, of the multitude,” by “A Letter concerning the Principles of the Roman Catholics,” and “A Defence of the Protestant Association,” which he printed in January, 1780. How does Mr. England know this? Simply, because, *at first*, it would appear, that Mr. O'Leary said so: Said so, by publishing both together, by treating

them as the productions of one author, and by calling his work,—I quote from Mr. England himself,—“Remarks on the Reverend John Wesley’s Letter on the civil Principles of Roman Catholics, and his Defence of the Protestant Association.” Every one reading all this, and seeing J. W. prefixed to the Letter, would take for granted that Mr. Wesley had written it. When, however, this collection came before Mr. Wesley, he answered it by likewise collecting what *he* had written,—namely, one letter to the Public Advertiser, and two to the Freeman’s Journal. Prefixed to the *two* letters there is a notice to the reader, (Appendix, page 73,) in which he distinctly declares that the *second* letter given by Mr. O’Leary was *none of his*; “*not his, that he never saw it before* ;” that it was “*a spurious letter* ;” and that though “in his first letter” there were “three lines in defence of a tract published in London,” yet that “he had not one line in ‘Defence of the Associations,’ either in London or elsewhere.”

This Letter, with the initials, J. W., thus given and remarked upon by Mr. O’Leary as Mr. Wesley’s,—thus declared to be Mr. Wesley’s by Mr. England, (of course, only after Mr. O’Leary,)—this Letter, I say, being a forgery, can its author be ascertained? It bears no resemblance whatever to Mr. Wesley’s style of thought and expression. It is found in Mr. O’Leary’s hands; but, most assuredly, *it is possible* that he might have found it elsewhere. Still, from the fact that it is found in his possession; that its title, as a Defence of the Association, enables him to do what the *three lines* of very general praise in reference to the Appeal would *not* enable him to do, namely, to connect Mr. Wesley with the Association and the Associators; it is impossible to avoid saying, that, as he *might* have found it elsewhere, so, likewise, he *might not*.

At all events, the forgery is published by himself, wherever it came from. What, then, was Mr. O’Leary’s conduct when Mr. Wesley declared publicly that the Letter was not his, that it was “*spurious*?” On this point, also, the reader shall judge for himself.

It will have been seen that Mr. O’Leary, according to Mr. England, called his “Remarks,” when first collected, “Remarks on the Rev. John Wesley’s Letter on the civil Principles of Roman Catholics, and his Defence of the Protestant Association.” In the volume of “Miscellaneous Tracts: by the Rev. Arthur O’Leary. Second Edition. 1781;” from which I now copy, the title is not, “Remarks on Mr. Wesley’s

Letter, and his Defence," &c: but, "The Rev. John Wesley's Letter concerning the civil Principles of Roman Catholics."—full stop—and then, "Also, A Defence"—not "his Defence," as it was, before, but, "A Defence of the Protestant Association." The title-page is so altered that it does not, any longer, directly assert Mr. Wesley's authorship of the paper in question. Still, the alteration is, in appearance, so slight, that, by many, it would be overlooked altogether; especially when on one page they see the name, "John Wesley," subscribed to the "Letter," and on the other side, both being before the eye at once, "A Defence of the Protestant Association. By J. W." And still more especially would they believe the authorship to be the same, when, coming to Mr. O'Leary's own portion of the volume, they find it introduced by the title-page, "Remarks on the foregoing Letter and Defence;" and read, on the top of every page, the running-title, "Remarks on Mr. Wesley's Letter, &c." It is not possible to avoid the conclusion, that Mr. O'Leary *intended* it to be believed, even after Mr. Wesley had disclaimed it, and pronounced it spurious, that he was the author, and thus, perpetually, to charge him with the *Defence* of the Protestant Association. And has he not been successful? Mr. O'Connell, taking for granted that Mr. England had accurately stated the facts of the case, and accurately described Mr. Wesley's character in a description which bespeaks its author to belong to the Court-of-Rome party, rather than to that which has more of an ecclesiastical and spiritual character about it,—Mr. O'Connell, assuming all this, thinks it is time now to make a few additions to the case, and directly charges Mr. Wesley with being one of the chief managers of the Association, both from the pulpit and the press; and with having aroused the Protestant mob to burn the houses of the Catholics, so that the first page of the political history of the Wesleyans is written in letters of blood. And though Mr. England, seventeen years ago, did not venture to go quite so far as this, yet he distinctly asserted Mr. Wesley to be the author of the "Defence" inserted among Mr. O'Leary's Tracts; and thus connecting him with the Protestant Association, he describes him as a crafty and designing hypocrite, feigning Protestant zeal to disguise his real objects. Yes; Mr. O'Leary's plan has hitherto been a successful one. Whoever was guilty of the forgery, he was determined to share in the advantages which it seemed to promise.

I am now describing a character very different from that which has hitherto been attributed to Father O'Leary. Till I read his Tracts, and compared them with the Letters he pretended to answer, I had always taken for granted that he was what is commonly called, a good-humoured, good-hearted man ; who, though he might be thought to be in error, would yet be entitled to respect. I cannot think so now ; or, if such he was, then does Popery contaminate all that it touches, and makes men, otherwise honourable, capable of such mean and disgraceful tricks, as, were they practised by a witness in an English court of justice, would place him in a very awkward position, and, at all events, cause the whole of his testimony to be struck out. I say little of his attempts to justify the Council of Constance, by defaming John Huss, and by misrepresenting the effect of a safe-conduct. The latter carries with it its own refutation. If a safe-conduct were only for the protection of one who journeyed to a distant place, through an unsettled country, and in agitated times, there was no occasion for the Council to issue its decree, "*quod non obstantibus salvis conductibus Imperatoris,*" &c. And as to the former, John Huss had spoken, indeed, of the vices of the Clergy, but so had others. If Father O'Leary had, for instance, only opened Von der Hardt's first volume, he would have found something tolerably pungent and strong on that same subject from the pens of Theoderic Vrie, Nicolas de Clemangis, and John Gerson. According to them, the whole ecclesiastical body, from head to foot, was diseased ; and to the dreadful diseases under which it laboured, the most skilful Physicians gave very terrible names.* And as to stirring up commotions, if that were a crime deserving of death by fire, how many had been stirred up by the three rival Popes ? But John Huss was burned ; while the Council contented itself with depriving of the Popedom, John XXIII.,—than whom, (if the articles on which the Council acted were true,) a more fearfully wicked man never lived,—and dismissing him to a rich, and, so far as position was concerned, to an honourable retirement. Let all this, however, be dismissed, as foreign to the case. Mr. O'Leary had very likely only dipped into L'Enfant for an

* *Hæc illis sacris morbis Medici peritissimi terribilia dederunt nomina :—Eze-
crabilis Simonia, aut irreligiosa sacrarum functionum venundatio. Insatiabilis
arrogantia. Inexplebilis avaritia. Immoderatus luxus et fastus. Crassa ruditas,
et rustica ignorantia. Ineptissimorum promotio. Supinus sacrorum neglectus.
Turpisque officiorum contemptus.*—Von der Hardt, Tom. i. Prolegom. cap. xiii.

apposite quotation or two ; while he seems, if we may judge from what he says, chiefly to have drawn his information from writers like Maimbourg, a man whose method of writing history drew from Seckendorf the cutting reflection, (the more cutting from the character of its author,) that his professions of modesty must rather be taken as affected and ironical, than sincere and serious.* The reader will know how to value these Roman blackenings of character, now that he sees how Mr. England and Mr. O'Connell have dealt with Mr. Wesley ; and, laying aside all reference to Mr. O'Leary's pleadings about the Council of Constance, I will adduce one single instance of his fidelity as a controversialist ; an instance which, I repeat it, had any thing like it occurred in an English witness-box, would have led the Judge to say, *at least*, "You may stand down, Sir !" while he dashed his pen through all the man might have said, as being utterly unworthy of credit. The charge is a heavy one ; but it is one of which any reader may form a judgment ; one, I would fain hope, on which the opinion of Mr. England would not differ from my own. I give it with no pleasure. The detection and exposure of wilful falsehood, — falsehood artfully employed to secure a seeming triumph, — constitute a most painful task. The reader, when he has the case before him, shall judge whether Mr. England's sentence about "the foul and miry paths of worldly stratagem and cunning," does not furnish exactly the terms which it is necessary to use, accurately to describe Mr. O'Leary's conduct. The instance is this :—

First, I will extract, from Mr. O'Leary's "Remarks," what he gives as a quotation from Mr. Wesley, together with his own observations upon it :—

"He" (Mr. Wesley) "denies '*that he himself, or his followers, were ever persecuted.*' For the truth, I appeal to his own conscience. I appeal to his '*Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion,*' wherein he describes the sufferings of several of his followers in England ; how he himself was dragged by the mob ; and the proceedings of a Magistrate, who dispersed a pamphlet, entitled, '*A Parallel between the Papists and Methodists,*' in order to kindle the rage of the populace against him. I appeal to the letter he wrote, many years ago, to Doctor Bailey, of Cork, wherein he complains

* *Inde est, ut modestiæ et verecundiæ professio, quâ premunire se in exordio hoc cupit, affectata potius aut ironica, quàm sincera et seria, videri possit.*—Seckendorf. Hist. Lutheran. lib. i. §. 1.

that the Grand Jury of that city found indictments against Charles Wesley, who makes the hymns, and ordered him to be transported as a vagabond. Mr. Wesley has got the letter printed, with the names of the Grand Jury. But, after having weathered the storm, the mariner on shore forgets his distresses as well as his sea-chart." (O'Leary's Tracts, p. 298.)

I have given the paragraph entire. The few words I have put in italics, for the sake of fixing the reader's attention the more easily, are, it will be seen, between inverted commas:—they are given as a quotation from Mr. Wesley. Their meaning is very plain. "He denies 'that he himself, or his followers, were ever persecuted.'" Mr. O'Leary, on this, appeals, first, to Mr. Wesley's conscience; and then, to Mr. Wesley's writings. The triumph of Mr. O'Leary seems to be as complete as it well can be. Mr. Wesley's writings abundantly prove, not only that he had been persecuted, but that he had publicly complained of it. Whoever only reads this paragraph of Mr. O'Leary's, must form one conclusion, and no more than one, of Mr. Wesley; namely, that, in controversy, he was totally regardless of truth. Had he ever said what is here ascribed to him,—“Neither I, nor my followers, were ever persecuted,”—we should consider him as utterly unworthy of respect. The assertion would have been a *pure falsehood*.

And, as such, Mr. O'Leary ascribes it to him; appealing, not to his writings only, but to his conscience also. Mr. O'Leary knew, therefore, the effect of his representation. He ascribes falsehood to Mr. Wesley, contradicts him by the plain testimony of his writings, and concludes with a note of taunting triumph.

I have dwelt the longer on this first step of the case, because one clear instance of falsehood, indubitably fastened on a man in the course of his testimony, is a guide in other parts of the case, where the same clearness of evidence cannot be procured. I now come to Mr. Wesley's actual assertion:—

On page 230 of Mr. O'Leary's Tracts, (in his "Remarks on Mr. Wesley's Letter," &c.) I find this sentence:—"Mr. Wesley has made the trial. In kingdoms, where, as in the Roman Pantheon, every divinity had its altars, speculative deviations from the religion established by law, the singularity of love-feasts, and nocturnal meetings, so unusual among modern Christians of every denomination, roused the vigilance of the Magistrate, and influenced the rage of the rabble." Let the reader now turn to the Appendix, and in Mr. Wesley's Second Letter to the "Freeman's Journal," he will find him

saying,—“ And this he illustrates by the treatment formerly given to the Methodists, ‘ whose love-feasts and watch-nights roused the vigilance of the Magistrate, and influenced the rage of the rabble.’ Indeed, they did not. Not only no Magistrate ever objected, either to one or the other, but no mob, even in the most turbulent times, ever interrupted them.” Here Mr. Wesley simply replies to Mr. O’Leary’s statement respecting love-feasts and watch-nights. In doing so, he allows that there had been “ turbulent times,” but denies that, *even in these*, the love-feasts or watch-nights had “ *either the one or the other* ” been objected to by any Magistrate, or interrupted by any mob. And this Mr. O’Leary transmutes into—“ He denies ‘ that he himself or his followers were ever persecuted ; ’ ” and, having thus made Mr. Wesley say what he had not said, he triumphs over him for the alleged contradiction,—a contradiction produced entirely by the false quotation given by Mr. O’Leary, known by him to be false, when he gave it, and reasoned upon it.

As to the “ Defence of the Protestant Association,” the authorship is not now likely ever to be (in this world) discovered. I do not charge the forgery on Mr. O’Leary, but it is impossible to deny the suspicious character of the circumstances in which it is found ; and that suspicion is deepened by the fact, that Mr. O’Leary, when it would suit his purpose to fasten contradiction and falsehood on Mr. Wesley, gives, as a quotation from him, what is not his, either in words or sense.

At all events, with this he is chargeable,—that, when told that the tract was spurious, though he slightly altered his title-page, yet he so managed matters that, ever since, those who have only read his Tracts, at once ascribe to Mr. Wesley the authorship of both the “ Letter ” and the “ Defence.” His object is thus gained. Mr. Wesley appears to be connected with the Protestant Association in a manner which could have been inferred from the few words he wrote in favour of “ The Appeal.” Indeed, had the Committee of the Association seen this “ Defence,” they would have voted Mr. Wesley their thanks for *that*, as well as for his Letter ; for that is Father O’Leary’s statement, that “ what they style in England the Gordonian Associations,”—“ voted their thanks to Mr. Wesley, for what they call his *excellent letter*.” And as Mr. Wesley’s “ Letter ” is dated January 21st, 1780, and Father O’Leary’s, February 28th, in the same year, this is the vote of thanks of which Mr. O’Connell tries to make so much use. The

"services" of Mr. Wesley are found in "*the excellent letter*;" and thus, as I have before said, the vote of thanks proves no particular connexion with the Association on the part of Mr. Wesley.

There is now only one point remaining in this part of the attack on Mr. Wesley; and with that one, I know not how to deal for want of information. Mr. O'Connell says, that Mr. Wesley "first roused the Protestant mob to burn the houses of the Catholics, and then accused the Catholics of having themselves burned their own houses." It is impossible to reply to this without knowing the terms in which the charge was made, and the circumstances which led to it. Mr. O'Connell has made no reference on the subject. Had I been able to find any thing like it in Mr. Wesley's Works, Mr. O'Connell's omission would not have prevented me from examining it. I want not to avail myself of any point of form. But I have not been able to find anything of the sort as yet. A brief sentence, (if one there be,) somewhere in fourteen closely-printed volumes in octavo, may easily elude the search for a long time. But what I could do, I have done. Mr. Wesley's friend and biographer, the Rev. Henry Moore, still survives. I have spoken to him on the subject. He tells me that he distinctly remembers, that, some time after the riots, being in company with Mr. Wesley, at a distance from London, he asked for some information on the subject. He says, that Mr. Wesley said he had a letter in his pocket, mentioning some singular circumstances, such as, that among the imprisoned rioters there were some Papists; that some of the rioters who were shot, were found to have good clothes on, under a coarse and ragged exterior; and that others were observed to have plenty of money. From this letter he read extracts to Mr. Moore, thus stating the rumours that were afloat on the subject. Mr. Wesley himself had left London, on one of his usual journeys, the preceding March, 1780. On the 2d of June, he appears to have been at Darlington; and, on the 7th of July, he returned to London. He was, therefore, absent during the whole time of the riots; and could know what had happened, only from the usual sources of information.

From the various tracts published on the occasion, it appears that there was much speculation as to the real authors and cause of the disturbances. The Government does not seem to have been at all prepared for them; and the letter from the Secretary of State to the Lord Mayor, (given above,) which

states that Government had received information which rendered it necessary for them to call on the Lord Mayor to have all in readiness to prevent a breach of the peace, was only dated the afternoon of the day subsequent to that on which the Protestant Association accompanied Lord George Gordon from St. George's Fields to Westminster. That this assembly was the *occasion* of the riots that ensued, cannot for a moment be doubted ; but that the Associators were themselves the *immediate authors* of the dreadful tumults, which, for a few days, threatened the devastation of London, most assuredly is—at least, *as yet*—any thing but matter of history. I am not justifying them : I am looking at the affair purely as a portion of English history ; and, thus looking at it, I again say, that, at the very time, there were many speculations as to the direct authorship, even among those who fully admitted that the assembling of the Protestant Association was the occasion, and by whom, therefore, that assembling was, in the strongest manner, condemned. One of the most curious tracts on the subject which I have found, is entitled,—“ Fanaticism and Treason : or, A dispassionate History of the Rise, Progress, and Suppression, of the Rebellious Insurrections in June, 1780. By a real Friend to Religion and to Britain. London : Printed for G. Kearsley, No. 46, Fleet-Street, 1780.” 8vo. pp. 92. The author refers to the civil commotions of 1640, and the following years ; and having stated his opinion that the leaders were the dupes of their own zeal, he adds,—“ This, indeed, seems the key to most of the celebrated characters of that age. Equally full of fraud and of ardour, these pious patriots talked perpetually of seeking the Lord, yet still pursued their own purposes ; and have left a memorable lesson to posterity, how delusive, how destructive, that principle by which they were actuated.” (P. 6.) I quote the passage for the sake of showing that the author was no particular friend to the Protestant Association, and would have no sympathy with their religious, or, as he would have termed it, their fanatical, zeal. In various parts of the tract, the writer hints, that there was a deep, designing ambition at the bottom of the whole, employing Protestant zeal as the deceived instrument of its own treasonable purposes. He thinks, too, that foreign influence was at work, seeking, at all hazards, to embarrass the Government. He says,—“ If the dry rock was originally struck by the magic wand of fanaticism, no sooner had the waters gushed forth, than they were swelled into a roaring stream by domestic treason and foreign villany.” (P. 85.)

The writer evidently intended his pamphlet to be a defence of the Government, who, it seems, were charged with fomenting the disturbances for the sake of adding to the strength of prerogative. One paragraph is a remarkable one. It explains many of his hints. "It is fact that *Delenda est Carthago* was the word: that some of the rioters killed by the military were only disguised as low people; that some of those in custody are certainly known to be Roman Catholics; that foreign paper to no inconsiderable amount has lately crossed the Channel; that strange stories are told, and believed, about the large sums of money produced and paid in behalf of the mob, by men, to all appearance, not worth sixpence; that stands of arms have been secured, either of French or Spanish make; that, strange as it may sound, the public may prepare to be surprised with evidence of something more than insinuations to some of the Protestant subscribers, that by indulgencies to the Roman Catholics, the King had broken his coronation oath; and that the throne could not be better filled than by Lord George Gordon, who would allow no nobility, but would reduce all his subjects to one happy level." (P. 87.)

The quotation will, in the first place, show the speculations that were occasioned by the riots, and thus, that it was not a matter of notoriety that the Protestant Association, having for its object, by violent acts, to terrify the Legislature from granting relief to the English Catholics, was therefore the well-known author of the mischief. I again beg not to be misunderstood. I am not defending their conduct. It led to all the evils that ensued. That was their guilt. Beyond that, I do not think it can be carried.

Then, secondly, the quotation proves, that, at the time, reports were prevalent, such as those which were communicated to Mr. Wesley, in the country, by his London correspondent; and which, as I have before said, Mr. Moore states Mr. Wesley read to him from a letter which he had received. Mr. Wesley was not the inventor of the reports, and he appears to have mentioned them as matters of curious rumour.

That speculations as to the causes of the riots were very seriously entertained, and that there were those who, while they saw in the Protestant Association the unconscious instruments, and in their assembling on June 2d the occasion, of the disastrous tumults, which only did not become a regular insurrection by the firmness of the Monarch himself, is proved, I think, by some Hymns that were written soon afterwards by

the Reverend Charles Wesley, his brother's friend and confidant, I might say, in the very highest degree. Mr. Moore believes, that the letter which I have mentioned was written by Mr. Charles Wesley to his brother. His own opinion of the riots is very strongly expressed in the Hymns which he wrote, as will be seen in a few verses quoted from them; they neither utter, nor hint, any charges against the Romanists; and the spirit they breathe is any thing but one of bigoted animosity.

THOU most compassionate High Priest,
In answer to our joint request
United to thy own,
With Pity's softest eye behold
The sheep which are not of this fold,
The church in Babylon.

The ignorant who miss their way,
Not wilfully, but weakly stray;
O let thy bowels move
To these by furious hate pursued,
And from the frantic multitude
Conceal their lives above.

As sheep appointed to be slain,
By cruel, persecuting men,
By fierce fanatic zeal;
By Christian wolves, reform'd in name,
Whose dire, atrocious deeds proclaim
The synagogue of hell.

Thy help to the distress'd afford,
The men that tremble at thy word,
The quiet of the land;
Thy worshippers, if blind, sincere,
Who honour thy Vicegerent here,
And bless his mild command.

As in religion's cause they join,
And blasphemously call it thine,
The cause of persecuting zeal,
Of treason, anarchy, and hell.

See, where the impetuous waster comes,
Like Legion rushing from the tombs;
Like stormy seas, that toss, and roar,
And foam, and lash the trembling
shore!

"Havoc," the' infernal leader cries!
"Havoc," the' associate host replies!
The rabble shouts—the torrent pours—
The city sinks—the flame devours!

A general consternation spreads,
While furious crowds ride o'er our
heads;
Tremble the powers thou didst ordain,
And rulers bear the sword in vain!

Our arm of flesh entirely fails,
The many-headed beast prevails;
Conspiracy the State o'erturns,
Gallia exults—and London burns!

OMNISCIENT God, to whom alone
The thoughts of every heart are
known,
Whose piercing eye the counsels sees,
Of Britain's subtlest enemies;
The dark conspirators display,
And force them into open day.

Their hell without a covering lies,
Thou know'st them through their close
disguise,
Who laid the well-concerted plan,
Who sprung the mine, and fired the
train,
As sure to lay our cities low,
And end a nation at a blow.

Thou hast, O God, thy work begun;
But make their utmost evil known,
Drag out the whole assassin band,
Distinguish'd by the villain's brand,
And let impartial justice find
Those pests and outcasts of mankind.

But chiefly them, who dared employ,
And taught the wasters to destroy;
Make all the principals appear,*
With all their black associates here;
Nor longer let the fiend conceal
Those choicest instruments of hell.

Then, as the rivers of the sea,
Turn back the people, Lord, to thee;
To thee, and to their king convert,
And plant thy fear in every heart,
That every heart may faithful prove,
His God, his king, and country love.

C. WESLEY.

* That is, "Make" his own brother, John Wesley, "appear," who, according to Mr. O'Connell, was a principal of these PRINCIPALS!!!

V.

Through the whole of that class of accusations, brought by Mr. O'Connell against the Wesleyans in general, and against Mr. Wesley, personally, which may be termed, distinctively, "political," I have now gone. Those which refer to Mr. Wesley's theology, as well as the statements respecting the versions of Scripture, must be reserved for another opportunity, and another publication. They do not, as do the others, relate to character; and may, therefore, be considered separately.

In what manner I have performed my task, the reader must judge for himself. My wish to avoid every thing ambiguous and vague, may have led me to the very borders, at least, of a detailing prolixity; but, in the circumstances in which I was placed, if this be an error, it is the safer one.

The result of the whole inquiry, as to my own mind, is a deepened, strengthened conviction, that, for the perpetuation of liberty in this country,—as in this country liberty is understood,—it is absolutely necessary that a political power should be possessed by Protestantism which ought not to be conceded to Romanism. Most gladly do I admit, that in proportion as Romanists in these realms show themselves *less Italian, and more English*, in that proportion should the difference be lessened, till it be as small as is consistent with the preservation of what an Englishman regards as an essential branch of freedom, namely, liberty of conscience. And if ever, by any happy change, Rome, wherever her power extends, places Catholics and Protestants on a level, so far as civil and religious liberty is concerned, let them, in the same respects, be placed on a level in this country. But it ought never to be forgotten, that from the time when concession began, by the passing of Sir George Saville's Bill, not only has all the concession been on one side, but proof has been given that cannot be misunderstood, that the spirit of Popery is at this hour as intolerant as ever, and that Popish controversialists are still characterized by that reckless hardihood of assertion which plainly aims at victory, and at victory alone.

Whether Mr. O'Connell has gained any thing by his attacks on Wesley and Wesleyanism; and whether, by this manifestation of the spirit of Popery,—as it exists among those of whom Mr. O'Connell may be taken as the representative,—the cause of Popery will be itself advanced, time will show. The Wesleyans, he may rely upon it, are less disposed than ever to

yield to the demands of those who seek to change, what Mr. Wesley justly terms, "our happy constitution." But, though it may appear strange to Mr. O'Connell and his friends, in all this we are conscious of neither bigotry nor intolerance. That there have been great and good men in connexion with the Roman Church, we are always ready to admit; and true greatness and goodness we know how to honour and admire wherever we find them. And though we seek to maintain Protestantism in its wonted ascendancy, it is not in prejudice of liberty that we do this, but to secure its full and permanent possession. And we will not even yet surrender the hope, that honourable-minded Roman Catholics, seeing that the course hitherto pursued by their leaders is only calculated to excite the resentment, and confirm the opposition, of all sincere Protestants, will take the matter into their own hands, and send those agitators, who only discredit and injure the cause which they espouse, to the obscurity which is fittest for them. If midnight broils they will have, let them quarrel among themselves; but let the British Senate no longer be disturbed by them.

APPENDIX.

I.

A LETTER

TO

THE PRINTER OF THE "PUBLIC ADVERTISER."

OCCASIONED BY

THE LATE ACT PASSED IN FAVOUR OF POPERY.

(THIS LETTER WAS PUBLISHED BY MR. O'LEARY ALSO.)

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A DEFENCE OF IT, IN TWO LETTERS,

TO THE EDITORS OF THE "FREEMAN'S JOURNAL," DUBLIN.

SIR,

SOME time ago a pamphlet was sent me, entitled, "An Appeal from the Protestant Association, to the People of Great Britain." A day or two since, a kind of answer to this was put into my hand, which pronounces its style contemptible, its reasoning futile, and its object malicious. On the contrary, I think the style of it is clear, easy, and natural; the reasoning, in general, strong and conclusive; the object or design,

kind and benevolent. And in pursuance of the same kind and benevolent design, namely, to preserve our happy constitution, I shall endeavour to confirm the substance of that tract, by a few plain arguments.

With persecution I have nothing to do. I persecute no man for his religious principles. Let there be as "boundless a freedom in religion" as any man can conceive. But this does not touch the point: I will set religion, true or false, utterly out of the question. Suppose the Bible, if you please, to be a fable, and the Koran to be the word of God. I consider not, whether the Romish religion be true or false; I build nothing on one or the other supposition. Therefore, away with all your common-place declamation about intolerance and persecution for religion! Suppose every word of Pope Pius's creed to be true; suppose the Council of Trent to have been infallible; yet I insist upon it, that no Government not Roman Catholic ought to tolerate men of the Roman Catholic persuasion.

I prove this by a plain argument: (let him answer it that can:— That no Roman Catholic does, or can, give security for his allegiance or peaceable behaviour, I prove thus: it is a Roman Catholic maxim, established, not by private men, but by a public Council, that "no faith is to be kept with heretics." This has been openly avowed by the Council of Constance; but it never was openly disclaimed. Whether private persons avow or disavow it, it is a fixed maxim of the Church of Rome. But as long as it is so, nothing can be more plain, than that the members of that Church can give no reasonable security to any Government of their allegiance or peaceable behaviour. Therefore they ought not to be tolerated by any Government, Protestant, Mahometan, or Pagan.

You may say, "Nay, but they will take an oath of allegiance." True, five hundred oaths; but the maxim, "No faith is to be kept with heretics," sweeps them all away as a spider's web. So that still no Governors that are not Roman Catholics can have any security of their allegiance.

Again: Those who acknowledge the spiritual power of the Pope can give no security of their allegiance to any Government; but all Roman Catholics acknowledge this: therefore, they can give no security for their allegiance.

The power of granting pardons for all sins, past, present, and to come, is, and has been for many centuries, one branch of his spiritual power.

But those who acknowledge him to have this spiritual power can give no security for their allegiance; since they believe the Pope can pardon rebellions, high treason, and all other sins whatsoever.

The power of dispensing with any promise, oath, or vow, is another branch of the spiritual power of the Pope. And all who acknowledge his spiritual power must acknowledge this. But whoever acknowledges the dispensing power of the Pope can give no security for his allegiance to any Government.

Oaths and promises are none; they are light as air; a dispensation makes them all null and void.

Nay, not only the Pope, but even a Priest, has power to pardon sins! This is an essential doctrine of the Church of Rome. But they that acknowledge this cannot possibly give any security for their allegiance to any Government. Oaths are no security at all; for the Priest can pardon both perjury and high treason.

Setting then religion aside, it is plain, that, upon principles of reason, no Government ought to tolerate men who cannot give any security to that Government for their allegiance and peaceable behaviour. But this no Romanist can do, not only while he holds that "no faith is to be

kept with heretics;" but so long as he acknowledges either priestly absolution or the spiritual power of the Pope.

"But the late Act," you say, "does not either tolerate or encourage Roman Catholics." I appeal to matter of fact. Do not the Romanists themselves understand it as a toleration? You know they do. And does it not already (let alone what it may do by and by) encourage them to preach openly, to build chapels, (at Bath and elsewhere,) to raise seminaries, and to make numerous converts day by day to their intolerant, persecuting principles? I can point out, if need be, several of the persons. And they are increasing daily.

But "nothing dangerous to English liberty is to be apprehended from them." I am not certain of that. Some time since, a Romish Priest came to one I knew, and, after talking with her largely, broke out, "You are no heretic; you have the experience of a real Christian!" "And would you," she asked, "burn me alive?" He said, "God forbid!—unless it were for the good of the Church!"

Now, what security could she have had for her life, if it had depended on that man? The *good of the Church* would have burst all the ties of truth, justice, and mercy; especially when seconded by the absolution of a Priest, or (if need were) a Papal pardon.

If any one please to answer this, and to set his name, I shall probably reply.—But the productions of anonymous writers, I do not promise to take any notice of.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

CITY-ROAD, January 21, 1780.

JOHN WESLEY.

II.

A DEFENCE

OF

THE PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION,

BY J. W.

(PUBLISHED BY MR. O'LEARY.)

VARIOUS pieces, under different signatures, having appeared in the public prints, casting unjust reflections on the Protestant Association, and tending to quiet the minds of the Protestants at the present alarming crisis, by insinuating that there is no danger arising from the toleration of Popery, and that such associations are unnecessary; I think it a piece of justice, which I owe to my countrymen, to give them a plain and true account of the views of this assembly, and lay before them the reasons which induced them to form this Association, and determined them to continue it.

Whether the gentlemen, who have favoured the public with their remarks on this occasion, are really Protestants, or Protestant Dis-senters, as they style themselves; or whether they are Papists in disguise, who assume the name of Protestants, that they may be able to undermine the Protestant cause with the greater success, is neither easy nor necessary to determine; but it is easy to see that they are either totally ignorant of the subject on which they write, or else they wilfully disguise it.

The pieces I refer to are written with different degrees of temper. One gentleman, in particular, appears to be very angry, and loads the Association, and their friends, with the most illiberal and unmanly abuse. If this gentleman had clearly stated the cause of his resentment, he might have been answered; but as he appears to be angry at he knows not what, he can only be pitied. Others have written with more candour and moderation, and would have been worthy regard, had they not been deficient in point of argument. If these are sincerely desirous of being informed, they are requested to attend to the following particulars:—

However unconcerned the present generation may be, and unapprehensive of danger from the amazing growth of Popery; how calmly soever they may behold the erection of Popish chapels, hear of Popish schools being opened, and see Popish books publicly advertised, they are to be informed that our ancestors, whose wisdom and firmness have transmitted to us those religious and civil liberties which we now enjoy, had very different conceptions of this matter; and had they acted with that coldness, indifference, and stupidity, which seems to have seized the present age, we had now been sunk into the most abject state of misery and slavery, under an arbitrary Prince and Popish Government.

It was the opinion of our brave, wise, circumspect, and cautious ancestors, that an open toleration of the Popish religion is inconsistent with the safety of a free people, and a Protestant Government. It was thought by them that every convert to Popery was, by principle, an enemy to the constitution of this country; and as it was supposed that the Roman Catholic religion promoted rebellion against the State, there was a very severe law made to prevent the propagation of it. Such was the state of things in the reign of the great Elizabeth; and Popery having, notwithstanding such restriction, gained ground in the reign of James II., though the encouragement it then received from the State was not equal to what it has now obtained, the nation was alarmed; and the noble and resolute stand which the Protestants then made against the advances of Popery, produced the Revolution.

In the reign of William III., the State was thought to be in danger from the encroachments of Rome; to prevent which, the Act of Parliament was made, which is now, in the most material parts, repealed; and several Protestants being of opinion, that this repeal will, in its consequences, act as an open toleration of the Popish religion, they are filled with the most painful apprehensions: they think that liberty, which they value more than their lives, and which they would piously transmit to their children, to be in danger: they are full of the most alarming fears, that chains are forging at the anvil of Rome for the rising generation: they fear, that the Papists are undermining our happy constitution: they see the purple power of Rome advancing, by hasty strides, to overspread this once happy nation: they shudder at the thought of darkness and ignorance, misery and slavery, spreading their sable wings over this highly-favoured isle: their souls are pained for their rights and liberties as men; and their hearts tremble for the ark of God.

Inspired with such sentiments, and under the influence of such reasonable and well-grounded fears, they think it a duty which they owe to themselves, their posterity, their religion, and their God, to unite as one man, and take every possible, loyal, and constitutional measure, to stop the progress of that soul-deceiving and all-enslaving superstition which threatens to overspread this land. It is to be hoped, that an

attempt, so just and reasonable, will be crowned with success; but should it fail, through the supineness or groundless prejudices of those who ought to stand first in this cause, the members of this Association will enjoy the satisfaction of a self-approving mind, conscious of having done its duty; while those who meanly desert the Protestant cause, and tamely suffer the encroachments of Rome, may see their error when it is too late, and be filled with bitterness and remorse at a conduct so mean and despicable, and so unworthy their profession.

Whatever such persons may think of themselves and their conduct, and however they may dress themselves up in the splendid robes of candour and moderation, they are to be informed that their conduct is highly criminal, and may be attended with the most deplorable consequences; as, by their neglecting to appear on this great occasion, they give our rulers reason to conclude, that it is the sense of the nation that Popery should be tolerated.

It is sincerely to be lamented, that Protestants in general are not more apprehensive of the danger. Have they forgot the reign of bloody Queen Mary? Have they forgot the fires in Smithfield? and can they behold the place without emotion where their fathers died? Will it ever be believed in future times, that persons of eminent and distinguished rank among the Protestants, and persons of high and exalted religious characters, refused to petition against Popery, and let it over-spread our nation without opposition? Will it be believed that Englishmen were so far degenerated from the noble spirit of their ancestors, as tamely to bow the neck to the yoke of Rome? "Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askalon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice; lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph."

It is not to be wondered at that the Papists, either openly or in disguise, take every method to prevent the just and reasonable view of the Protestant Association, and therefore represent them as factious, seditious, and enemies to toleration. These charges, and every other which the malice of our enemies, or the groundless fears and prejudices of our mistaken friends, shall hereafter exhibit, will be separately and distinctly considered in the course of these Letters; and such an account given of the views of the Protestant Association, and the line of conduct which they have pursued, and intend to pursue, in order to accomplish the great end for which they associate, as will, I hope, obviate every objection, remove every scruple, and excite the Protestants to join hand in hand, and unite as one man, in that cause, in which their present and future welfare is so nearly concerned, by

J. W.

*. This is called by Mr. Wesley, in the very next page, (73,) "a spurious Letter palmed upon us;" and neither Father O'Leary, nor any of the Papists of that day, made the slightest attempt to authenticate this fabricated document. They found it more convenient to give it the "go-by," in their own peculiar way, —though still, with characteristic astuteness, while abandoning the *rather onerous* task of authentication, displaying the half-discarded fabrication in such a dexterous manner as to give it the semblance of having been actually the production of John Wesley!!! "The style of thought and expression," as I have shown in page 57, is itself a sufficient proof of the "spurious" character of the fictitious "Defence," —even if Mr. Wesley himself had not added, in his Second Letter, (page 76,) this most significant sentence, which proved to be unanswerable, concerning that document which his cunning adversary wished to palm on the public as the Second Letter of Mr. Wesley:—"But I can find no more of the Second Letter in the last page, than in the first. *It would be strange if I did; for THAT Second Letter was never heard of, but in Mr. O'L's 'Remarks.'*"

III. TWO LETTERS

TO

THE EDITORS OF THE FREEMAN'S JOURNAL, DUBLIN.

TO THE READER.

SEVERAL months since, Father O'Leary, a Capuchin Friar in Dublin, published Remarks upon this Letter * in the Freeman's Journal. As soon as these were sent to me, I published a Reply in the same Paper. When I read more of his Remarks, printed in five succeeding Journals, I wrote a second Reply; but did not think it worth while to follow, step by step, so wild, rambling a writer. Mr. O'Leary has now put his six Letters into one, which are reprinted in London, with this title, "Mr. O'Leary's Remarks on the Rev. Mr. W.'s Letters in Defence of the Protestant Associations in England; to which are prefixed Mr. Weale's Letters."

Is it by negligence or by design, that there are so many mistakes even in a title-page?

1. "To which are prefixed Mr. W.'s Letters." No: the second of those Letters is not mine. I never saw it before.
2. But where are the two Letters published in the Freeman's Journal? Why is a spurious Letter palmed upon us, and the genuine ones suppressed?
3. "Letters in Defence of the Protestant Association in England." Hold! In my first Letter I have only three lines in defence of a Tract published in London. But I have not one line "in Defence of the Associations," either in London or elsewhere.

If Mr. O'Leary will seriously answer the two following Letters, he may expect a serious reply. But if he has only drollery and low wit to oppose to argument, I shall concern myself no further about him.

LONDON,
Dec. 29, 1780.

LETTER I.

GENTLEMEN,

1. MR. O'LEARY does well to entitle his Paper "Remarks," as that word may mean anything or nothing; but it is no more an answer to my Letter, than to the Bull Unigenitus. He likewise does wisely in prefacing his "Remarks" with so handsome a compliment: this may naturally incline you to think well of his judgment, which is no small point gained.

2. His manner of writing is easy and pleasant; but might it not as well be more serious? The subject we are treating of is not a light one: it moves me to tears rather than to laughter. I plead for the safety of my country; yea, for the children that are yet unborn. "But cannot your country be safe, unless the Roman Catholics are persecuted for their religion?" Hold! Religion is out of the question: but I would not have them persecuted at all; I would only have them hindered from doing hurt. I would not put it in their power (and I do not wish that others should) to cut the throats of their quiet neighbours. "But they will give security for their peaceable behaviour." They cannot while they continue Roman Catholics; they cannot while they are members of that Church which receives the decrees of the Council of Constance, which maintains the spiritual power of the Bishop of Rome, or the doctrine of priestly absolution.

3. This I observed in my late Letter. Whoever, therefore, would

* Which is No. I., page 68, in this Appendix.

remark upon it to any purpose, must prove these three things : (1.) That the Decree of the Council of Constance, publicly made, has been publicly disclaimed. (2.) That the Pope has not power to pardon sins, or to dispense with oaths, vows, and promises. And, (3.) That no Priest has power to pardon sins. But has Mr. O'Leary proved these three points? Has he proved any one of them? He has, indeed, said something upon the first : he denies such a Decree was ever made.

4. I am persuaded Mr. O'Leary is the first man that ever made the important discovery. But, before he is quite sure, let him look again into Father L'Abbé's "*Concilia Maxima*," printed at Paris in the year 1672. The last volume contains a particular account of the Council of Constance ; one of whose decrees (page 169) is, "That heretics ought to be put to death, *non obstantibus salvis conductibus Imperatoris, Regum, &c.*, notwithstanding the public faith engaged to them in the most solemn manner." Who then can affirm that no such doctrine or violation of faith with heretics is authorized by this Council? Without putting on spectacles, which, blessed be God, I do not wear, I can read a little Latin still. And, while I can, I must fix this horrid doctrine on the Council of Constance.

5. But, supposing the Council of Constance had never advanced this doctrine, or the Church of Rome had publicly disclaimed it, my conclusion stands good till it is proved, (1.) That no Priest has a power of pardoning sins ; and, (2.) That the Pope has neither a power of pardoning sins, nor of dispensing with oaths, vows, promises, &c.

Mr. O'Leary has proved neither of these : and what has he proved? It is hard to say. But if he proves nothing, he either directly or indirectly asserts many things. In particular, he asserts, (1.) "Mr. Wesley has arraigned in the jargon of the Schools." Heigh-day! What has this to do here? There is no more of the jargon of the Schools in my Letter, than there is of Arabic. "The Catholics all over the world are liars, perjurers," &c. Nay, I have not arraigned one of them. This is a capital mistake. I arraign the doctrines, not the men. Either defend them, or renounce them.

"I do renounce them," says Mr. O'Leary. Perhaps you do. But the Church of Rome has never renounced them. "He asperses our communion in a cruel manner." I do not asperse it at all in saying these are the doctrines of the Church of Rome. Who can prove the contrary?

(2.) "Mr. O'Leary did not even attempt to seduce the English soldiery." I believe it ; but does this prove any of these three points? "But Queen Elizabeth and King James roasted heretics in Smithfield!" In what year? I doubt the fact.

(3.) "Mr. Wesley is become an apologist of those who burned the chapel in Edinburgh." Is not this said purely *ad movendam invidiam*? "to inflame the minds of the people?" For it has no shadow of truth. I never yet wrote nor spoke one word in their defence. "He urged the rabble to light that fire." No more than he urged them to dethrone the King.

(4.) "Does Mr. Wesley intend to sound Alecto's horn, or the war-shell of the Mexicans?" All this is cruel aspersion indeed ; designed merely to inflame! What I intend is neither more nor less than this,—to contribute my mite to preserve our constitution both in Church and State.

(5.) "They were the Scotch and English regicides who gave rise to the Irish massacre." *The Irish massacre!* Was there ever any such

thing? Was not the whole account a mere Protestant lie? O no! it was a melancholy truth, wrote in the blood of many thousands. But the regicides no more gave rise to that massacre than the Hottentots. The whole matter was planned several years, and executed before the King's death was thought of. "But Mr. Wesley is sowing the seeds of another massacre!" Such another as the massacre of Paris?

6. "Was he the trumpeter of persecution when he was persecuted himself?" Just as much as now. Cruel aspersions still! designed and calculated only to inflame. "Did he then abet persecution on the score of conscience?" No, nor now. Conscience is out of the question. "His Letter contains all the horrors invented by blind, misguided zeal, set forth in the most bitter language." Is this gentleman in his senses? I hope not. Else, I know not what excuse to make for him. Not one bitter word is in my Letter. I have learned to put away "all bitterness, with all malice." But still this is wide of the mark; which of those three points does it prove?

7. "In his Second Letter, he promises to put out the fire which he has already kindled in England." *Second Letter!* What is that? I know nothing of it. *The fire which he has kindled in England.* When? Where? I have kindled no fire in England, any more than in Jamaica. I have done, and will do, all that is in my power to put out that which others have kindled.

8. "He strikes out a creed of his own for Roman Catholics. This fictitious creed he forces upon them." My words are these: "Suppose every word of Pope Pius's Creed to be true." I say not a word more of the matter. Now, I appeal to every reasonable man, Is this striking out a creed of my own for Roman Catholics? Is this forcing a fictitious creed on them, "like the Frenchman and the blunderer in the Comedy?" What have I to do with one or the other? Is not this dull jest quite out of season? And is the creed, composed by the Council of Trent, and the Bull of Pope Pius IV., a fictitious one? Before Mr. O'Leary asserts this again, let him look into the *Concilia Maxima* once more, and read there, *Bulla Pii Quarti super forma Juramenti professionis fidei*.* This *forma professionis fidei*, I call Pope Pius's Creed. If his "stomach revolts from it," who can help it?

9. Whether the account given by Philip Melancthon of the words spoken (not in Hebrew, but in Latin) be true or false, it does not at all affect the account of Miss Duchesne, which I gave in her own words. And I cannot but observe, that after all the witticisms which he has bestowed upon it, Mr. O'Leary does not deny that the Priest might have burnt her, "had it been for the good of the Church."

10. "Remark a Missionary inflaming the rabble, and propagating black slander." Remark a San Benito Cap, painted with devils; but let him put it on, whom it fits. It does not fit me: I inflame no rabble: I propagate no slander at all. But Mr. O'Leary does. He propagates a heap of slander in these his Remarks. I say too, "Let the appeal be made to the public and their impartial reason." I have nothing to do with the "jargon or rubbish of the Schools," lugged in like "the jargon of the Schools" before. But I would be glad if Mr. O'Leary would tell us what these two pretty phrases mean.

The whole matter is this. I have, without the least bitterness, advanced three reasons why I conceive it is not safe to tolerate the

* "The Bull of Pius IV. concerning the form of the oath on the profession of faith."

Roman Catholics. But still, I would not have them persecuted : I wish them to enjoy the same liberty, civil and religious, which they enjoyed in England before the late Act was repealed. Meantime, I would not have a sword put into their hands ; I would not give them liberty to hurt others. Mr. O'Leary, with much archness and pleasantry, has nibbled at one of these three reasons, leaving the other two untouched. If he chooses to attack them in his next, I will endeavour to give him a calm and serious answer.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

Manchester, March 23, 1780.

IV.

LETTER II.

GENTLEMEN,

SOME time ago, in a Letter published at London, I observed, "Roman Catholics cannot give those whom they account heretics any sufficient security for their peaceable behaviour."

1. Because it has been publicly avowed in one of their General Councils, and never publicly disclaimed, that faith is not to be kept with heretics ; 2. Because they hold the doctrine of priestly absolution ; and, 3. The doctrine of Papal pardons and dispensations.

Mr. O'Leary has published "Remarks" on this letter ; nine parts in ten of which are quite wide of the mark. Not that they are wide of *his* mark, which is to introduce a plausible panegyric upon the Roman Catholics, mixed with keen invectives against the Protestants, whether true or false it matters not. All this is admirably well calculated to inspire the reader with aversion to these heretics, and to bring them back to the holy, harmless, much-injured Church of Rome. And I should not wonder, if these six papers should make six thousand converts to her.

Close arguing he does not attempt ; but he vapours, and skips to and fro, and rambles to all points of the compass, in a very lively and entertaining manner.

Whatever has the face of an argument in his First Letter I answered before. Those of the 14th, 16th, 18th, and 21st instant, I pass over at present : I have now only to do with what he advances in your Journal of March 12.

Here I read : "For Mr. Wesley's Second Letter, see the last page." I have seen it ; but I can find no more of the Second Letter in the last page, than in the first. It would be strange if I did ; for that Second Letter was never heard of, but in Mr. O'L.'s "Remarks." "But why then does he mention it over and over ?" Truly, I cannot tell.

He begins : "Fanaticism"—Hold ! There is no fanaticism in my Letter, but plain, sober reason. I "now expect" (they are his own words) "a serious answer to a serious charge."

My argument was : The Council of Constance has openly avowed violation of faith with heretics : But it has never been openly disclaimed. Therefore, those who receive this Council cannot be trusted by those whom they account heretics. This is my immediate conclusion. And if the premises be admitted, it will infallibly follow.

"On this Mr. O'L. says, "A Council so often quoted challenges peculiar attention. We shall examine it with all possible precision and impartiality. At a time when the broachers of a new doctrine" (as new as the Bible) "were kindling the fire of sedition, and shaking the foundations of thrones and kingdoms,"—big words, but entirely void of truth!—"was held the Council of Constance. To this was cited John Huss, famous for propagating errors, tending to—wrest the sceptre from the hands of Kings."—Equally true! "He was obnoxious to Church and State." To the Church of Rome; not to the State in any degree.

"Protestant and Catholic legislators enacted laws for burning heretics." How wisely are these jumbled together; and the Protestants placed first! But pray, what Protestant legislator made such laws, either before or after the Catholic ones? I know, one man, Servetus, was burned at Geneva; but I know not that there was any law for it. And I know, one woman, Joan Bocher, was burned in Smithfield, much against the mind of King Edward. But what is this to the numbers who were inhumanly butchered by Queen Mary; to say nothing of her savage husband? "But the same laws were executed by Queen Elizabeth and King James." How? Did either of these burn heretics? Queen Elizabeth put two Anabaptists to death; but what was this to the achievements of her sister?

He adds a well-devised apology for the Romish persecutions of the Protestants as necessarily resulting from the nature of things, and not from any wrong principles. And this he illustrates by the treatment formerly given to the Methodists, "whose love-feasts and watch-nights roused the vigilance of the Magistrate, and influenced the rage of the rabble." Indeed, they did not. Not only no Magistrate ever objected either to one or the other, but no mob, even in the most turbulent times, ever interrupted them.

But to the Council: "Huss strikes at the root of all temporal power and civil authority. He boldly asserts, that all Princes, Magistrates, &c., in the state of mortal sin, are deprived, *ipso facto*, of all power and jurisdiction. And by broaching these doctrines, he makes Bohemia a theatre of intestine war. See the Acts of the Council of Constance in L'Abbé's Collection of Councils."

I have seen them, and I can find nothing of all this therein. But more of this by and by.

"He gave notice that he would stand his trial; but he attempted to escape." No, never; this is pure invention. "He is arrested at Constance,"—whence he never attempted to escape,—and confined. His friends plead his safe-conduct. The Council then declared, "No safe-conduct granted by the Emperor, or any other Princes, to heretics, ought to hinder them from being punished as justice shall require. And the person who has promised them security shall not be obliged to keep his promise, by whatever tie he may be engaged."

And did the Council of Constance declare this? "Yes;" says Mr. O'Leary. I desire no more. But, before I argue upon the point, permit me to give a little fuller account of the whole affair:—

The Council of Constance was called by the Emperor Sigismund and Pope John XXIII., in the year 1414. Before it began, the Emperor sent some Bohemian gentlemen to conduct John Huss to Constance, solemnly promising that he should "come and return freely, without fraud or interruption."

But before he left Prague, he waited on the Bishop of Nazareth,

Papal Inquisitor for that city and diocese, who, in the presence of many witnesses, gave him the following testimonial :—

“ We, Nicholas, do by these presents make known to all men, that we have often talked with that honourable man, Master John Huss, and in all his sayings, doings, and behaviour, have proved him to be a faithful man ; finding no manner of evil, sinister, or erroneous doings in him, unto this present. PRAGUE, August 30, 1414.”

This was attested by the hand and seal of the public notary, named Michael Pruthatietz.

After this, Conrade, Archbishop of Prague, declared before all the Barons of Bohemia, that “ he knew not that John Huss was culpable or faulty in any crime or offence whatever.”

So neither the Inquisitor nor the Archbishop knew anything of “ his making Bohemia a theatre of intestine war ! ”

In October he began his journey, accompanied by two noblemen, Wencelat de Duba, and John de Clum. On November 3d, he came to Constance, and was treated with great respect. But not long after, he was suddenly arrested and cast into a noisome prison. Here he quickly fell sick. During his sickness, his accusers exhibited twelve articles against him. But none of them charge him with sedition. They relate purely to the Church.

May 14, 1415. The Nobles of Bohemia complained to the Council, “ When Master John Huss came to the Council, under the Emperor’s safe-conduct, he was, in violation of the public faith, imprisoned before he was heard.” They add : “ And he is now grievously tormented, both with fetters, and with hunger and thirst.”

June 8. His accusers brought thirty-nine articles more, and afterward twenty-six others. But both the former and the latter relate wholly to the Church.

Seven more were brought next. The first of these is, “ If the Pope, Bishop, or Prelate be in deadly sin, he is then no Pope, Bishop, or Prelate.” But this he himself explains in the same tract whence it is taken. “ Such, as touching their deserts, are not worthily Popes or Pastors before God ; yet, as touching their office, are Popes and Pastors.”

After these, six more articles were exhibited ; but all relate to the Church, as do nineteen more that follow them. In fine, nineteen others were preferred by the Chancellor and University of Paris. One of these was, “ No man being in deadly sin is a true Pope, Prelate, or Lord.” This seems to be the same with the preceding charge ; only they have mended it by adding the word “ Lord.” Another was, “ Subjects ought publicly to reprove the vices of their rulers.” It does not appear that ever he held this.

In the Seventeenth Session, the sentence and condemnation of John Huss was read and published. The Emperor then commanded the Duke of Bavaria to deliver him to the executioners ; for which glorious exploit he was thus addressed by the Bishop of Landy, in the name of the Council : “ This most holy and goodly labour was reserved only for thee, O most noble Prince ! Upon thee only doth it lie, to whom the whole rule and ministration of justice is given. Wherefore thou hast established thy praise and renown ; even by the mouths of babes and sucklings thy praise shall be celebrated for evermore.”

From this whole transaction we may observe, 1. That John Huss was guilty of no crime, either in word or action ; even his enemies, the Archbishop of Prague, and the Papal Inquisitor, being Judges.

2. That he never preached or wrote anything tending to sedition ; neither was there in fact any sedition, much less intestine war, in Bohemia, while he ministered there.

3. That his real fault, and his only one, was, opposing the Papal usurpations.

4. That this "most noble Prince" was a bigoted, cruel, perfidious murderer ; and that the Fathers of the Council deserve the same praise, seeing they urged him to embrace his hands in innocent blood, in violation of the public faith, and extolled him to the skies for so doing ; and seeing they have laid it down as a maxim, that the most solemn promise made to an heretic may be broken.

But, says Mr. O'Leary, "This regards the peculiar case of safe-conducts granted by Princes to heretics." If you mean, they took occasion from a particular case to establish a general rule, this is true ; but what then ? If the public faith with heretics may be violated in one instance, it may be in a thousand. "But can the rule be extended farther ?" It may ; it must ; we cannot tell where to stop. Away then with your witticisms on so awful a subject ! What ! do you sport with human blood ? I take burning men alive to be a very serious thing. I pray, spare your jests on the occasion.

But you have another plea : "Sigismund only promised to guard him from any violence in going to the Council." Why, this was just nothing. What man in his wits would have moved a step upon such a promise as this ? "But this was all it was in his power to do." It was not. It was in his power to have told the Council, "My own honour, and yours, and that of the empire are at stake. I will not upon any account suffer the public faith to be violated : I will not make myself infamous to all generations. My name shall not stink to all future ages. I will rather part with my empire, with my life." He could have taken John Huss out of their hands, and have sent him safe to his own country. He would have done it, had he been an honest man ; had he had either honour or conscience. I ask Mr. O'Leary, Would not you have done it, had you been in Sigismund's place ? If you say, "No," a Protestant ought not to trust you, any more than he would trust a wild bull.

I am afraid this is the case, for you strangely add : "It was nugatory in Sigismund to grant him a safe-conduct ; for neither King nor Emperor could deprive the Bishops of their right of judging" (add, and of murdering) "heretics." It is plain Sigismund thought he could, that he could screen Huss from all dangers ; else he had been both a fool and a knave to promise it ; especially by a public instrument, which pledged his own honour, and that of the whole empire, for his safety.

Now for flourish : "Thus the superannuated charge of violation of faith with heretics"—no more superannuated now, than it was while John Huss was in the flames—"vanishes away." No, nor ever will. It still stares us in the face ; and will do so, till another General Council publicly and explicitly repeals that infamous determination of the Council of Constance, and declares the burning of John Huss to have been an open violation of all justice, mercy, and truth. But flourish on : "The foundation then of Mr. Wesley's aerial fabric being sapped,"—not at all,—"the superstructure falls of course, and his long train of false and unchristian assertions." What can this mean ? I know of no "long train of assertions," whether true or false. I use three arguments, and no more, in proof of one conclusion.

“What more absurd, than to insist on a General Council’s disclaiming a doctrine which they never taught!” They did teach it; and that not by the by, not incidentally; but they laid it down as a stated rule of action, dictated by the Holy Ghost. I quote chapter and verse: I say too, “See ‘L’Abbé’s Councils,’ printed at Paris, in 1672.” Yea, and they were not ashamed to publish this determination to all the Christian world! and to demonstrate their sincerity therein, by burning a man alive. And this Mr. O’Leary humorously compares to the roasting a piece of beef! With equal tenderness I suppose he would compare the “making the beards of heretics,” (that is, thrusting a burning furze-bush in their face,) to the singeing a fowl before it was roasted.

“It is sufficient to disclaim it, when it is fixed upon us.” Then disclaim it without delay; for it is fixed upon you, to all intents and purposes. Nay, and you fix it upon yourselves, in every new edition of the Councils; in all of which, this Council stands in *eternam rei memoriam*,* and this very determination, without the least touch of blame! It must therefore stand as an avowed doctrine of the Church of Rome, that “heretics ought to be condemned and executed, notwithstanding the most solemn assurances to the contrary:” In other words, that “the public faith, even that of Kings and Emperors, ought not to be kept with heretics.”

What security then for my life can any man give me, till he utterly renounces the Council of Constance? What security can any Romanist give a Protestant, till this doctrine is publicly abjured? If Mr. O’Leary has anything more to plead for this Council, I shall follow him step by step. But let him keep his word, and “give a serious answer to a serious charge.” Drollery may come in when we are talking of roasting fowls; but not when we are talking of roasting men.

Would I then wish the Roman Catholics to be persecuted? I never said or hinted any such thing. I abhor the thought: It is foreign to all I have preached and wrote for these fifty years. But I would wish the Romanists in England (I had no others in view) to be treated still with the same lenity that they have been these sixty years; to be allowed both civil and religious liberty, but not permitted to undermine ours. I wish them to stand just as they did before the late Act was passed; not to be persecuted or hurt themselves; but gently restrained from hurting their neighbours.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

Chester, March 31, 1780.

* “As a perpetual memorial of this matter.”

THE END.

POSTSCRIPT.

On looking over Mr. Wesley's letter to the "Public Advertiser," (page 68,) I notice, in the second paragraph, (page 69,) an expression which, as words are *now* used, may perhaps be misunderstood. Mr. Wesley says, it will be seen on reference to the passage, "With *persecution* I have nothing to do. I *persecute* no man for his religious principles. Let there be as '*boundless a freedom in religion*' as any man can conceive. But this does not touch the point." The paragraph, of which these words are the commencement, adds at the conclusion, with the intervention of only half-a-dozen lines, "Yet I insist upon it, that no Government, *not Roman Catholic*, ought to *tolerate* men of the Roman Catholic persuasion."

At first sight, there appears a contradiction here. Mr. Wesley speaks of *freedom in religion*, and yet says that no Government, not Catholic, should *tolerate* Roman Catholics. His meaning is evidently this :—He would have no man punished for the exercise of his religion. This is what he asserts in the *beginning* of the sentence. But neither would he have the Roman Catholic religion distinctly and legally recognised and encouraged. This is what he asserts at the *close*.

But though the *meaning* is plain, the *expressions*, perhaps, call for some little explanation. Mr. Wesley uses the word "toleration," as having a positive signification, distinct from, and going beyond, the ideas of non-punishment, and non-prohibition. He means by it, not *mere allowance*, but direct recognition and encouragement. The word being thus understood, there will not be even the appearance of contradiction in the paragraph ; and it was not very likely that a writer so acute as Mr. Wesley, would have allowed what, in *one sense* of the word, would have been so obvious a contradiction to occur, not only where it could not be overlooked, but where it would have defeated his own object.

Nor is he singular in this extended use of the word "toleration." Clarendon, speaking of the projected "Spanish match," says, distinguishing between "*the repeal of the penal laws*" on the one hand, and "*toleration*" on the other :—"It having been always believed, both in Spain and Rome, that this marriage was to be attended with a full repeal of all the penal laws against the Papists, AND a plenary toleration of the exercise of that religion in England." (History, &c. Oxford, 8vo. edition, 1732, vol. i., page 15.)

Lord Mansfield, also, on the trial of Lord George Gordon, says, (in reference to the Act which had been the ostensible cause of so much irritation,) "Thus much let me say, it is most injurious to say that this Bill, called Sir George Saville's, is a toleration of Popery. I cannot deny, that, where the safety of the State is not concerned, my own opinion is, that men *should not be punished for mere matter of conscience, and barely worshipping God in their own way*. But where what is alleged as matter of conscience is *dangerous or prejudicial to the State*, which is the case with Popery, the safety of the State is the supreme law ; and an erroneous religion, so far as upon principles of sound policy

that safety requires, ought to be restrained and prohibited. No good man has ever defended the penal laws against the Papists upon any other ground. But this Bill is not a toleration. It only takes away the penalties of one Act out of many.....Therefore, be the merits of the Bill, called Sir George Saville's Bill, as they may, it is totally a misrepresentation to infer from thence that Papists are tolerated. It is a cry to raise the blind spirit of fanaticism, or enthusiasm, in the minds of a deluded multitude, which, in the history of the world, has been the cause of much ruin and national destruction. But I have already told you, the merits of this law are totally immaterial upon this trial; and nothing can be so dishonourable to Government, as to be forced to make, or to repeal, by any armed multitude, any law. From that moment there is an end of all legislative authority."

I may likewise add a few lines from an eminent Romanist writer, in which it will be seen that the distinction between *positive toleration* and *non-punishment*, is observed :—"We clearly see that what renders this Church" (of Rome) "so odious, is principally, and more than any other doctrines, her *holy and inflexible incompatibility*. If we may so speak, it is that she wills to be alone, because she believes herself the spouse, the being who suffers no participation.—For it is this, in effect, which renders her so severe, so insociable, and, consequently, so odious to all the separate sects, that the most part, at the beginning, only demanded, if they might not be *tolerated*, at least that they might not be *struck with her anathemas*. (*Si non qu'elle voulut bien tolérer, ou du moins ne les frapper de ses anathèmes.*) But her *holy severity*, and the *holy delicacy of her sentiments*, allowed not that *indulgence*, or rather, *that softness*: and her inflexibility, which makes her hated by schismatic sects, renders her dear and venerable to the children of God." (*Bossuet, Hist. des Variations, &c.*) So that, according to Bossuet, the Roman Church can neither *tolerate*, nor *not-punish*; but must always exercise this "holy and inflexible severity." A description, this, very different from what we hear of the love of Romanists for civil and religious liberty. But perhaps Bossuet will now be represented as though he were a writer of no note,—knowing neither the real sentiments, character, nor practices of the Papacy!!!

Non-toleration was the ground that Mr. Wesley took. So far as the mere exercise of religion was concerned, he would have neither punishment nor prohibition. But, inasmuch as he believed that the Papist could not give to a Protestant Government that full, undivided, unsuspected allegiance, which the safety of the State requires, he would not go beyond this non-punishment, and non-prohibition, to what he called "toleration," that is, to direct recognition and encouragement. The distinction is not a fanciful one. It is one which was observed by Lord Mansfield; it was evidently in the mind of Clarendon when he penned the sentence given above; Bossuet's language is based upon it; and it was contended for by Locke in his Letters on Toleration.

THE END.



